

ISLAM AS EMANCIPATOR OF WOMEN

VOL. II

Marriages of the Holy Prophet ? ,
Slanders and Criticisim against Him,
Introduction of Marital Reforms

By
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated

Primarily to

The Almighty Allah

The All-Compassionate, The All-Merciful

And then to the

Lovers of Truth

By the Same Author:

Hagar the Princess, 2012 (2nd Ed. 2016).

Israelites Versus Other Nations, 2012.

Slavery and Human Rights Through the Ages, 2017 (Two Volumes)

→ Forthcoming Books:

New World Order or Kingdom of God on Earth

Original Sin and Salvation

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Muhammad Ashraf Chheenah,
Chairman,
ISRC, Islamabad, 2019.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD/CE	anno domini (Latin), in the year of the Lord, Common/ Christian Era.
Ar	Arab, Arabia, Arabian, Arabic.
B	Bible.
BC	Before Christ; Bible Commentary; Biblical Commentary.
BCE	Before Christian/Common Era.
c/ca	About, approximately (Latin circa)
CE	Common Era: secular form of AD.
Ch	Chapter.
DB	Dictionary of the Bible.
Ed	Editor, edited by, edition.
Edn	Edition.
e.g./eg	for example (Latin exempli gratia).
Enc	Encyclopedia/Encyclopaedia/Encyclopedic.
Heb	Hebrew.
i.e.	that is, that means, namely.
MT/Mt	Massoretic /Masoretic Text of the OT; Matthew; Mount.
NT	New Testament of the Bible Contains 27 books: 4 Gospels, Acts, Epistles (letters), and lastly Revelations. It was originally written in Greek, whereas Jesus Christ delivered his message in the Aramaic language.
op.cit.	in the work already quoted (Latin opere citato).
OT	Old Testament of the Bible Consists of 39 books: The first five are collectively called the Pentateuch or Torah. It was originally written in Heb.
ﷺ	peace and blessings of Allah upon him.
p/pp	Page/pages.
P	Priestly tradition of the OT of the Bible.
Pbl/pbg	Publisher(s) Publication(s) /Publishing/.
Rvd	Revised.
St	Saint.
s.v.	Under the word or heading.
Tr.	Translator, translation, translated by.
Uni./Univ.	University.
v/vv	Verse/verses of the Bible.
V	Version (Tr.) of the Bible.
Vol.	Volume.
(...)	It indicates that some word, words, sentence, sentences, line, or lines have been left over from the original quotation.
(....)	It shows that a sizeable text has been omitted from the original quotation.
[]	The square brackets are used to insert something by the Tr./Ed., which did not originally exist in the quotation.
AV/KJV	Authorized Version/King James Version.
CCB	The Christian Community Bible (Manila: Divine Word Pbln, 1988).
CEV	Contemporary English Version (NY: American Bible Society, 1995).
GNB/TEV	Good News Bible/ Today's English Version -do-.
GNB:REV	Good News Bible (Revised Edn), Minto: The B. Society in Australia Inc. NSW.
LB	The Living Bible (Illinois: Tyndale House Pblshrs. 1976)
MT	The Torah, The Mesoretic Text (Jewish Pbln. Society of America).
NAB	New American Bible, Catholic Bible Association, 1991.
NASB	The New American Standard Bible, Cambridge Univ. Press 1977.
NEB	The New English Bible, Oxford Univ. Press, 1985.

NIV	New international Version, London, 1984.
NJB	The New Jerusalem Bible, Standard Edn, Bombay: St. Paul's, 1993.
NKJV	New King James Version.
NLTr.	New Living Translation, 1996:
NOAB.	The New Oxf. Annotated B:
NRSV.	New Revised Standard Version:
RSV.	Revised Standard Version.
RBV	Revised Berkeley Version:
Peshitta	The Authorised B. of the Church of the East, 1957.
Knox	Ronald A.Knox, Tr. From the Vulgate, Macmillan & Co. 1957

Abbreviations of the Books of the Bible

1. The Jewish Bible/OT

Abbreviation:	Book:	Abbreviation:	Book:
Amos or Am	Amos	Judg. or Jgs	Judges
1 Chron. or 1 Chr	1 Chronicles	1 Kings or 1 Kgs	1 Kings
2 Chron. or 2 Chr	2 Chronicles	2 Kings or 2 Kgs	2 Kings
Dan. or Dn	Daniel	Lam. or Lam	Lamentations
Deut. or Dt	Deuteronomy	Lev. or Lv	Leviticus
Eccles. or Eccl	Ecclesiastes	Mal. or Mal	Malachi
Esther or Est	Esther	Mic. or Mi	Micah
Exod. or Ex	Exodus	Nah. or Na	Nahum
Ezek. or Ez	Ezekiel	Neh. or Neh	Nehemiah
Ezra or Ezr	Ezra	Num. or Nm	Numbers
Gen. or Gn	Genesis	Obad. or Ob	Obadiah
Hab. or Hb	Habakkuk	Prov. or Prv	Proverbs
Hag. or Hg	Haggai	Ps. (pl.Pss.) or	Psalms
Hosea or Hos	Hosea	Ps (pl. Pss)	
Isa. or Is	Isaiah	Ruth or Ru	Ruth
Jer. or Jer	Jeremiah	1 Sam. or 1 Sm	1 Samuel
Job or Jb	Job	2 Sam. or 2 Sm	2 Samuel
Joel or Jl	Joel	Song of Sol. or	Song of Solomon (=Song of Songs)
Jon. or Jon	Jonah	Sg	
Josh. or Jo	Joshua	Zech. or Zec	Zechariah
		Zeph. or Zep	Zephaniah

2. The New Testament

Abbreviation:	Book:	Abbreviation:	Book:
Acts	Acts of the Apostles	Luke or Lk	Luke
Apoc.	Apocalypse (=Revelation)	Mark or Mk	Mark
Col. or Col	Colossians	Matt. or Mt	Matthew
1 Cor. or 1 Cor	1 Corinthians	1 Pet. or 1 Pt	1 Peter
2 Cor. or 2 Cor	2 Corinthians	2 Pet. or 2 Pt	2 Peter
Eph. or Eph	Ephesians	Philem. or Phlm	Philemon
Gal. or Gal	Galatians	Phil. or Phil	Philippians
Heb. or Heb	Hebrews	Rev. or Rv	Revelation (=Apocalypse)
James or Jas	James	Rom. or Rom	Romans
John or Jn	John (Gospel)	1Thess. or 1Thes	1 Thessalonians
1 John or 1 Jn	1 John (Epistle)	2Thess. or 2Thes	2 Thessalonians
2 John or 2 Jn	2 John (Epistle)	1 Tim. or 1 Tm	1 Timothy
3 John or 3 Jn	3 John (Epistle)	2 Tim. or 2 Tm	2 Timothy
Jude	Jude	Titus or Ti	Titus

PREFACE

In the first volume of the book, we had gone into great details to explain the plight of women during all ages in the world. References had also been made to the Islamic reforms to improve the fate of the female sex. The present volume has been devoted entirely to the marital reforms made by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to emancipate women from male dominance, degradation, exploitation, coercion and oppression. The Holy Prophet not only tried to implement these reforms just by commandments to the believers but he himself had to serve as an exemplar where other people shrank from the same. The study we hope will suffice to invalidate the false propaganda against the Prophet ﷺ and to obliterate the calumnies and shortcomings alleged to him and the mothers of the believers.

The Western historians and scholars like Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), William Muir, Barnaby Rogerson and others had alleged sensuality to the Holy Prophet ﷺ primarily on the basis of his multimarriages during the last part of his assignment. Such people, however, did not take into account the true considerations behind those marriages and the reforms in the marital laws to emancipate the women throughout the world. They also ignored the fact that Holy Prophet ﷺ had multipharious and strenuous responsibilities on him during this expansionist period of his life. In stead of appreciating the marvelous success of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with the minimum possible resources, at his disposal, the critics try to denigrate him on one account or the other. For impartial readers we have gone into detail to explain the severity of the circumstances and the most wide-ranging responsibilities of the promised Prophet of the Lord ﷺ to complete and implement the faith and law to establish an ideal and classless society in the world. This volume, therefore, aims at presenting the true facts and circumstances faced by the Prophet ﷺ during the last decade of his life and his excellent achievements during this period.

Following others, the famous English historian, Mr. Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975) also alleged spiritual bathos to the Prophet ﷺ on the grounds that he turned from a prophet

to a conquerer towards the end of his career. We have, therefore, attempted to reply him in a proper manner in our chapter titled '*Allegations of Sovereignty and Sensuality*'. Similarly, we also have attempted to reply the criticism made by John J. Pool, Stanley Lane Poole, Edward William Lane and others.

Unluckily the present writer had been suffering from severe opthalmic problems due to which proof reading had not been up to the mark. The readers are, therefore, requested to excuse the writer in this respect.

GOD AND THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

Creation of the Universe

There are hundreds of different theories describing the creation of the universe. In the present text, however, we shall be ignoring all the mythological accounts of creation and concentrating only on the revelation from the Lord. Unluckily, no written records of earlier revelations are extant today. Genesis the first book of the Old Testament contains some elements of revelation confused with the Babylonian mythology and handiworks of the saints and sages of the Israelites.¹ It, therefore, fails to provide us reliable information about the attributes of the Almighty and the origin of His creation in the universe. Since the Lord and His creation must be taken as the starting point of any other discussion, we need to discuss the same summarily with the revelations of the Lord in the Qur'an. Subsequently, we shall be having a glance over the role of the Prophets to provide guidance to different communities in the world. As such, even the briefest background traced out from the Bible and the Qur'an may help us understand the attributes of the Lord and the purpose of the creation of universe and man. Those sources may also suffice to have some knowledge about the prophets from Adam and Jesus Christ. It can, however, be observed that all the prophets had been the messengers of the same Lord God of the Universe preaching the same essentials of faith to their followers. The said background may help us understand the role of the last and final prophet of the Lord to guide humankind to the straight path towards Him. After refreshing our information about the work and conduct of the Prophets preceding the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we shall be discussing briefly the life and work of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

¹ For detailed criticism on the Old Testament and Genesis, please see chapter 3 and 4 titled '*The Old Testament*' and '*The Genesis*' in our book '*God Creation and Guidance*'.

with special emphasis on the reforms he introduced to emancipate the women throughout the world.

Creation as Per Qur'an

The Muslims believe that from all eternity, Allah alone had been the God of the universe and there never had been nor shall be any other God besides Him. Everything in the universe has been created by Almighty Allah alone merely with His commandment "be" and it was. He neither had any partners or associates to serve as help meet with him nor a son to share His divinity or authority or to exercise powers of the Almighty.²

As regards the creation of the universe, the Qur'an asserts:

It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth; Moreover His design comprehended the heavens, for He gave order and perfection to the seven firmaments; and of all things He hath perfect knowledge.³

Even after their creation, the Lord controls all the affairs throughout the universe and nothing is free from compulsion about their conduct except the limited freedom of choice and independent action allowed to Jinn and man. God is, neither sitting idle nor is He subject to fatigue, rest or sleep. God reveals that:

1. Glorify the name of thy Guardian-Lord Most High, 2. Who hath created, and further, given order and proportion; 3. Who hath ordained laws. And granted guidance;⁴

This shows that after initial creation, the Lord provided further order and proportion to make everything subject to His law. This alludes to inbuilt guidance and strict programming of everything which also included

² Al-Qur'an Ch. 112, 59:23-24, 42:11, Joh 8:42 etc.

³ Al-Qur'an 2:29

⁴ Al-Qur'an 87:1-3 This shows that God not only created the universe but also put it into an order besides assigning true proportions to each of his creatures "i.e., *He endows it with inner coherence and with qualities consistent with the functions which it is meant to perform, and thus adapts it a priori to the exigencies of its existence.*" (Allama Asad)

commandments for gradual evolution of most of the creatures.

It had also been revealed that:

11. And He [it is who] applied His design to the skies, which were [yet but] smoke; and He [it is [who] said to them and to the earth, "Come [into being], both of you, willingly or unwillingly!" - to which both responded, "**We do come in obedience**".⁵

All creatures had, therefore, pledged their unconditional and enduring obedience to the commandments of the Almighty.

After continued research prolonging over hundreds of years, the scientists have admitted the fact that **the gaseous matter or smoke had been the primal matter for creation of the universe**. The verse quoted above also reveals that the commandments for creation were not like blind man's buff. The Omnipotent creator had already comprehended the design of His creation and had perfect fore-knowledge of the outcome of His commandment. He did not need to wait and see the result nor did he need to express his pleasure that *'it was good'*.⁶ God's commandment was not a shot in the dark nor had He any apprehension about its failure.

Initially the skies had been created in the form of smoke i.e. a gas- evidently hydrogen gas, which physicists regard as the primal element from which all material particles of the universe have evolved and still evolve. Modern observations of the scientists fully endorse the revelation in the Qur'an. God said:

ARE, THEN, they who are bent on denying the truth not aware that the heavens and the earth were [once] **one single entity, which We then parted asunder?** and [that] We made out of water every living thing? Will they not, then, [begin to] believe?⁷

⁵ Al-Qur'an 41:11 (*The Message of Qur'an*, Allama Muhammad Asad)

⁶ Gen 1:4 KJV

⁷ Al-Qur'an 21:30 (Allama Asad),

This verse revealed the unitary origin of the universe about 1300 years before the Astrophysicists discovered it as explained in their so-called 'Big-Bang Theory' and the model proposed by George Gamow in 1948. The scientists have now been able to discover that about 15 billion years ago the primary matter or super atom underwent an explosion and it started expanding at an even speed on all sides. The said fact about the continuing expansion of universe had also been revealed by the Qur'an 1300 years earlier than the scientists (Al-Qur'an 51:47).

That every living thing had been created from water (Al-Qur'an 21:30) has also been reaffirmed in the following:

"And Allah has created every animal from water: of them there are some that creep on their bellies; some that walk on two legs; and some that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills for verily Allah has power over all things." (Al-Qur'an 24:45)

Biological scientists today endorse the same. Allama Yusuf Ali has commented that:

"Apart from the fact that protoplasm, the original basis of living matter, is liquid or semi-liquid and in a state of constant flux and instability, there is the fact that land animals, like the higher vertebrates, including man, show, in their embryological history, organs like those of fishes, indicating the watery origin of their original habitat. The constitution of protoplasm is about 80 to 85 percent water."

AND IT IS We who have built the universe with [Our creative] power; and, **verily, it is We who are steadily expanding it.**⁸

The astrophysicists endorse the revelation of single entity of the primal mass before the Big Bang due to which the universe started expanding constantly. (Many scientists today differ with this by asserting that the Universe is expanding on ever-increasing speed). The law of gravitation seems to bind all heavenly bodies in the respective orbits assigned to them and they continue to maintain the balance commanded by the Lord.

Another stage has been described as under:

⁸ 51:47, Allama Asad

And He [it is who] decreed that they become seven heavens in two aeons, **and imparted unto each heaven its function.** And We adorned the skies nearest to the earth with lights, and made them secure: such is the ordaining of the Almighty, the All-Knowing.⁹

We learn from the above that it was entirely in accordance with the decree of the Almighty that there occurred an explosion in the primal matter or smoke and it evolved into seven heavens in two different periods of time. Even subsequently, the seven heavens or skies were not left uncontrolled. They were duly imparted guidance or had been programmed to fulfill their duties for the ultimate development intended by the Lord.

God is constantly providing for all the needs of His creatures in the heavens and on earth:

Of Him seeks (its need) every creature in the heavens and on earth: every day in (new) Splendour doth He (shine)!¹⁰

The World of Compulsion

We firmly believe that the Almighty never had a beginning nor he is likely to meet with an end. No one can, therefore, determine the time of the existence of the Lord God. As regards the creation of the universe, the modern scientists start from the event named 'Big Bang' which according to their estimates occurred about 13.7b years ago. The universe thereafter started expanding and continues to expand at speeds disputed among the scientists. The scientists also estimate the creation of our solar system and the Earth at about 4.568 Billion years ago. We have no exact information about the creation of the angels but it can be assumed that the Lord had created them much earlier than the event named Big Bang. For billions of years, thereafter, every creature including the angels had been serving the Almighty under an order of administration which we can describe as compulsion, programming or in

⁹ Al-Qur'an 41:12 (*The Message of Qur'an*, Allama Muhammad Asad)

¹⁰ Al-Qur'an 55:29.

built guidance of the Lord. No creature could, therefore, deviate from the guidance provided to them even to the slightest degree. The system continued to prevail for unknown billions of years. It was then that the Almighty decided to test and try two new species i.e. Jinn and Man on the planet Earth.

Experiment of Free Will on Earth

The Lord God had created the Angels from light. Long after them, He created the Jinn from the flame of fire probably during the period the earth was hot like the Sun. Jinn were perhaps the first creature of the Lord who were free from the compulsion or inbuilt guidance from the Lord. Instead of in built guidance, therefore, the Lord managed to guide them through prophets from their own species. Jinn being insolent and stiff-necked creatures took undue liberties to disobey the commandments of the Lord. Ultimately with the cooling down of the earth to sustain vegetation and life on it, the Almighty decided to test and try the conduct and performance of human beings in accordance with the guidance provided to them through prophets of the Lord sent to each and every community in the world.¹¹ It is worth noting here that from the very beginning, the Almighty had created Adam with the predestination to place him as His vice-gerent on Earth. It was through Adam and Eve that the Lord created their progeny to live on Earth in accordance with the guidance of the Lord. With the exception of Jinn and man, therefore, everything else in the universe is serving the Almighty under the order of compulsion of the Creator. Since, no other creature can deviate from the duties assigned to them, therefore, they enjoy freedom from accountability before the Lord.

Instead of placing the new creature abruptly on Earth, the Almighty chose to announce the advent of His vicegerent to the angels as well as the Jinn. He, therefore, foretold them that:

Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth." They said: "Wilt Thou place therein one who will

¹¹ For detailed discussion on the subject, refer to our book '*The New World Order*' s.v. '*God's Covenant with His Creatures*' and '*Man as Vicegerent of the Lord*'

make mischief there in and shed blood?- whilst we do celebrate Thy praises and glorify Thy holy (name)?" He said: "I know what ye know not."¹²

The event of the creation of Adam and the episode of disobedience of Iblees to bow before Adam has been discussed in detail by us in our book *'The New World Order (the Kingdom of God on Earth)'* s.v. *'God's Covenants with His Creatures'* and *'Man as Vice-gerent of the Lord'*. We are referring to the episode only **to highlight that Satan or Iblees had been the first creature of the Lord to disobey His commandment** in spite of the fact that the Almighty had foretold the angels and Jinn to bow before the vicegerent of the Lord. The covenant referred to above was, therefore, the first covenant of the human spirits with the Almighty even before placement of Adam on Earth. The Almighty revealed that:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَى شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ أَوْ تَقُولُوا إِنَّمَا أَشْرَكَ آبَاؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ

172. When Thy Lord drew forth from the Children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves, (Saying): **"Am I not your Lord (Who cherishes and sustains you)?"- They said: "Yea! we do testify!" (This), Lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: "Of This we were never mindful":** **173.** Or Lest ye should say: "Our fathers before us may have taken false gods, but we are (their) descendants after them: wilt Thou then destroy us because of the deeds of men who were futile?"¹³

The Lord had reminded humankind that their souls had made the covenant with the Lord acknowledging Him their Lord God who cherishes and sustains them. The Almighty stressed that they must not forget the covenant nor seek protection under the excuse that they did not remember the covenant. Another excuse could be that in the absence

¹² Al-Qur'an, 2:30 (Yusuf Ali).

¹³ Al-Qur'an 7:172-173 (Yusuf Ali).

of true knowledge they had been following their forefathers who had taken false gods. Since they were followers of their ancestors, they did not deserve to be punished due to the misguidance inherited from them. This was the reason that the Almighty had been sending His prophets to various communities to rehearse and revive the message of the Lord and human duties towards Him (Al-Qur'an 10:47, 35:24).

Although each and every creature had already pledged its willing obedience to the commandments of the Almighty yet the sovereign Lord continued to make fresh covenants reminding human beings of their commitment to Allah SWT. Through the afore-stated covenant, the human spirits confessed the Almighty as their God which also implied willing obedience to fulfill their obligations towards the one and the only Lord God of the Universe.

Covenant of the Prophets

After the covenant from the mankind, the Almighty took the pledge from all the prophets as quoted below:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ قَالَ أَأَقْرَضُكُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي قَالُوا أَفَرَزْنَا قَالَ قَاشِهُدُوا وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

Behold! Allah took the covenant of the prophets, saying: "I give you a Book and Wisdom; **then comes to you a messenger, confirming what is with you**; do ye believe in him and render him help." Allah said: "**Do ye agree, and take this my Covenant as binding on you?**" They said: "We agree." He said: "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses."¹⁴

All the prophets from Adam to Jesus were, therefore, duty bound to announce the advent of the Prophet promised by the Lord. Elsewhere, we have discussed in detail the preachings of the prophets foretelling their followers to obey the promised prophet of the Lord as fervently as they could. It is, therefore, strange to observe that the repeated prophecies of the prophets conveying the advent of the

¹⁴ Al-Qur'an 3:81 (Yusuf Ali).

promised prophet and commandment of the Lord to obey him had no impact on the People of Book i.e. the Israelites and the Christians. They arrogantly chose to follow Satan instead of the preachings of their prophets. In spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been reviving and rehearsing the same message of the Lord which had already been there in the OT, they continued to disobey and oppose the promised prophet of the Lord as much as they could.

God Took on Him to Provide Guidance

The Qur'an tells us that while placing Adam and Eve on Earth, the Lord revealed to them:

We said: "Get ye down all from here; and if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."¹⁵

To forestall the false excuses of the people the God had taken on Him to provide the guidance to the people.

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَىٰ وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَىٰ .

Verily We take upon Ourselves to guide, And verily unto Us (belong) the End and the Beginning.¹⁶

God, therefore, sent a prophet to each and every community in the world (Al-Qur'an 10:47, 35:24). It is pertinent to note here that all the prophets of the Lord had been the human beings preaching in the language spoken by the community to which they had been sent:

We sent not a messenger except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, in order to make (things) clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power, full of

¹⁵ Al-Qur'an, 2:38 (Yusuf Ali).

¹⁶ Al-Qur'an, 92:12-13 (Yusuf Ali). See also 23:44, 43:7-8.

The Promised Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

As discussed earlier, all the prophets were bound to preach their followers about the advent of the promised prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and to obey him diligently. All the prophets of the Lord had, therefore, undertaken to do so (Al-Qur'an 3:81). We, therefore, believe that all the prophets must have foretold about the promised prophet of the Lord but with the exception of OT and the NT, we have no written records of the same. Even so the prophecies in the Old and New Testaments suffice to inform the believers about the finality of the Prophethood and their obedience to the same. We had already quoted from the Qur'an the covenant of the Prophets with the Almighty according to which they were duty bound to convey to their followers about the advent of the promised prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Qur'an, therefore, informs us about Abraham and Ishmael who while raising the walls of Ka'aba at Makkah had beseeched the Lord to 'send amongst them a messenger of their own' to fulfill all their requirements of faith and guidance. God reveals that:

وَأَذِ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ .

127. And remember Abraham and Isma'il raised the foundations of the House (With this prayer): "Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us: For Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-knowing. **128.** "Our Lord! make of us Muslims, bowing to Thy (Will), and of our progeny a people Muslim, bowing to Thy (will); and show us our place for the celebration of (due) rites; and turn unto us (in Mercy); for Thou art the Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. **129.** "Our Lord! send amongst them a Messenger of their own, who shall rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom, and sanctify them: For Thou art the Exalted in Might, the Wise."¹⁸

¹⁷ Al-Qur'an, 14:4 (Yusuf Ali).

¹⁸ Al-Qur'an, 2:127-29 Yusuf Ali.

After Abraham, therefore, Jacob too had predicted the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a departing message from him. The Bible quotes him having said:

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.¹⁹

In the verse quoted above, Jacob had foretold the Israelites that descendants of Judah will continue to wield authority and remain custodians of the Divine law till the advent of 'Shiloh' a term connoting the advent of some great prophet as well as a king to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Muhammad was, therefore, the long awaited promised Prophet of the Lord foretold to all the prophets who were dutybound to announce his advent and preach his obedience by their followers.

As against Jacob, Moses being the great lawgiver before Muhammad had gone into great detail²⁰ to describe the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to stress that the people of Israel must not turn away to any other source of guidance than the promised Prophet ﷺ who will be the only trust worthy guide towards the Lord. As a final message from him, therefore, Moses warned the Israelites to refrain from pagan practices and to follow the guidance of the promised Prophet of the Lord (Deu 18:9-21). The God had even warned the Israelites to take revenge from those who refuse to follow the prophet promised by Him. In this respect, they must also remember the curses of Moses for those who disobey the commandments of the Lord (Deu 27:11-26). For ready reference about the promised prophet, therefore, we are reproducing the specific words of Moses advising the Israelites that:

For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do. The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, **of thy brethren, like unto me**; unto him ye shall hearken;

¹⁹ Gen 49:10 KJV.

²⁰ Deu 18:14-20, 33:2.

According to all that thou desirest of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a **Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.**²¹

The Decalogue had been the core of the faith and teachings of Moses to the Israelites. The first three commandments contained the following words:

I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God. (Deu 5:6-9 KJV).

The first commandment had been reemphasized as quoted below:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. (Deu 6:4-5 KJV).

The Israelites as well as the Christians agree that the commandment quoted above was the first and the most important commandment of the LORD.²² All the Prophets of Israel had been rehearsing the same. Since the Israelites had always been behaving arrogantly by refusing to obey the commandments of the LORD which had been distasteful to them, therefore, Moses ended the prediction about the promised prophet with the divine warning quoted in the following:

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto **my words which he shall speak in my name**, I will

²¹ Deu 18:14-18 KJV.

²² Mar 12:28-30 KJV.

require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, **or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.**²³

After repeating his message to the Israelites again and again, the Holy Prophet Moses had warned the nation not to add anything in the Law of the Lord nor to subtract anything from it. Deuteronomy, therefore, records that:

1. Then Moses said to the people, "Obey all the laws that I am teaching you, and you will live and occupy the land which the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. **2. Do not add anything to what I command you, and do not take anything away.** Obey the commands of the LORD your God that I have given you."²⁴

It is, therefore, evident from the above that Moses had delivered the entire message of the Lord to finalize His covenant with the Israelites. As such, no prophet among the Israelites had the authority to change even a tittle from the same. **Only the promised prophet ﷺ making a new covenant with the people could introduce any amendment or change in the Law of Moses as per guidance received from the Almighty.**

Jeremiah had gone into great details to warn the people about the false prophets and their teachings (Jer 23:16-17, 21-22, 24-32).

The most important part of his prediction was about the new covenant as quoted below:

31. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: **32.** Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: **33.** But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, **I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and**

²³ Deu 18:14-20 KJV.

²⁴ Deu 4:1-2 KJV.

will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.²⁵

It was, therefore, evident to the Jews as well as the Christians that the Qur'an is the new covenant containing the law promised by the Lord. **This is the only scripture that has been written on the hearts of millions and millions of people since the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.** The law as such has been put in the inward parts of the believers. The verse 34 quoted above denies the kingdom of the priests under the new covenant whether they are Jews or the Christians who enjoy the self acquired power to interpret the law and to change the meaning of the scriptures in accordance with their own desires. The Lord had clearly foretold that the holders of the new covenant will not be bound by the teachings of any of the priests or the Church authorities. Everyone will be able to know the law directly from the Qur'an. These people, therefore, can easily recognize the promised prophet ﷺ and the message conveyed by him. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ had been the final warners from the Lord towards the Israelites. It's a pity that the Jews did not receive either of them properly. John the Baptist had been beheaded in the prison on the orders of Herod Antipas. As regards Jesus, most of the Jews ignored his preachings during his life. No one ever recorded the words spoken by him nor did they preserve in writing the preachings of Jesus Christ. We, therefore, find no Gospel written by any of the apostles chosen by Jesus Christ himself. No disciple ever wrote down the memoirs from Jesus Christ in the language spoken by him. While Jesus spoke Aramaic, all the four Gospels extant today were originally written in Greek by the writers who had neither visited the Holy Land nor seen or heard Jesus speaking to his audience. The four evangelists to whom the gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke and John has been ascribed also failed to record the source of their information as basis of the gospels compiled in their name. As such the world

²⁵ Jer 31:31-34 KJV.

stands deprived not only of the true words spoken by Jesus Christ but also the veritable teachings of his faith. **The Gospels extant today do not contain even two of the original words spoken by Jesus himself.** No doubt there are about 8 words of Aramaic attributed to Jesus Christ scattered in different Gospels yet they lose their credibility due to lack of consensus among the evangelists. This was so because no one among his apostles or disciples took care to preserve the words and language of Jesus Christ in a written form.

While according to the Christians, Jesus had been crucified during 30 to 33 AD the earliest writings about him were the 14 letters of St. Paul written during 51 to 68 AD i.e. about 18 to 35 years after the death of Jesus Christ. St. Paul was a Greek speaking Roman citizen and a Jew from Tarsus who had neither seen nor heard Jesus Christ speaking to the people. He claimed to be an apostle of Jesus Christ merely on the basis of a vision²⁶ for which we find no evidence except the words of St. Paul himself. Different versions of the said vision recorded in the Gospel and acts are self-contradictory. Readers, therefore, fail to decide as to which one of the same is correct. In spite of all this, **the Christians rely on Saint Paul much more than they trust in the prophets and the Lord.**

All of the four gospels were written between 70 AD and 110 AD by the Greek speaking subjects of the Roman Empire who could neither understand nor interpret the preachings of Jesus Christ in the Aramaic language. The Gospels have, therefore, been compiled under the influence of the epistles attributed to St. Paul. It is, however, a pity that St. Paul had neither been among the original apostles chosen by Jesus himself nor the Evangelists mention about his having seen or heard him preaching. Gospels also do not refer to his visions or conversion to Christianity. It is only in the Acts attributed to St. Luke a companion, disciple and physician of St. Paul who claimed to have traveled with him during his various journeys in Greece and Rome etc. that we find St. Paul mentioned for about 196 times. **As against this, the same St. Luke has not mentioned St. Paul even once in the Gospel ascribed to him.** It is,

²⁶ Acts 9:3-16, Acts Chapter 22, 2 Cor 11:23.

therefore, evident from the above that the compiler of the Gospel attributed to Luke might have been someone else than Luke suggested as the composer of the Acts. We also believe that Luke the personal physician and the closest companion of St. Paul during his journeys in Greece and Rome could not have been unaware of the contents of the epistles attributed to St. Paul. Had he been the compiler of the acts, he could have written nothing contradictory to the epistles. We, therefore, do not agree that St. Luke the evangelist and personal physician of St. Paul could be the author of the Acts of the Apostles. The following quotation also endorses our view:

A critical consensus emphasizes the countless contradictions between the account in Acts and the authentic Pauline letters.²⁷

Reverting to the original theme, we observe that according to the Qur'an even Jesus had foretold the people about the advent of the prophet promised by the Lord in the following:

وَأَذَّ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ
وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ.

And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the apostle of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the law (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of an Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad." but when He came to them with Clear Signs, They said, "This is evident sorcery!"²⁸

Alas! The Christians left no stone unturned to conceal the identification of the promised Prophet by rendering the word 'Ahmed'²⁹ as paraclete, helper, comforter, redeemer, spirit, advocate, counselor, etc. They, therefore, made determined efforts to conceal the truth revealed to them through their prophets. God, therefore, warned them in the following:

²⁷ Theissen, Gerd; Merz, Annette (1998) [1996]. *The Historical Jesus: a Comprehensive Guide*. Translated by Bowden, John. Eerdmans, p. 32.

²⁸ Al-Qur'an 61:6 Yusuf Ali.

²⁹ Al-Qur'an, 61:6.

Ye People of the Book! Why do ye clothe Truth with falsehood, and conceal the Truth, while ye have knowledge?³⁰

The people of the Book know this as they know their own sons; but some of them conceal the truth which they themselves know.³¹

Those who conceal the clear (Signs) We have sent down, and the Guidance, after We have made it clear for the people in the Book,-on them shall be Allah's curse, and the curse of those entitled to curse.³²

They were fully aware of the fact that Jesus was a man born of a woman and nothing more than a prophet as well as a follower of Moses but instead of sticking to the true teachings of Moses and Jesus, they preferred to follow St. Paul and his disciples, who on the basis of Greek logic, Greco-Roman mythology and pagan faiths throughout the Middles East developed a catholic theology by ascribing divinity to Jesus Christ. Consequently, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit replaced the uncountable gods of mythology and Law of Moses was changed to conform to the faith and law of the Roman Empire. Instead of strict monotheism, therefore, they introduced Trinity with names differing from many other religions of the Middle East.

The Christians knew full well that the OT and preachings of Jesus Christ lent absolutely no support to the trinity. They also knew that faith in trinity abrogated the first three commandments of the Decalogue which were even preached by Jesus himself. The message of God conveyed by the prophets from Moses to Jesus had already continued to suffer from numerous alterations over a period of 1500 years but it became more corrupted since the time of St. Paul. It was, therefore, to revive, restore and to complete the faith and law of the Lord that the Almighty chose to send His promised prophet with his final message to endure forever.

³⁰ Al-Qur'an 3:71 Yousuf Ali.

³¹ Al-Qur'an 2:146 Yousuf Ali.

³² Al-Qur'an 2:159 Yousuf Ali. See also 2:42, 2:140 2:174, etc.

Advent of the Promised Prophet ﷺ

Let us remember the prayer of Prophet Abraham (A.S.) while building the walls of Ka'aba at Makkah. The Lord graciously accepted his supplication exactly as per the words of his prayer (Al-Qur'an 2:129) as quoted above. The gracious response of the Almighty was that:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ
الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ .

Allah did confer a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a messenger from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the Signs of Allah, sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom, while, before that, they had been in manifest error.³³

The Almighty had undoubtedly bestowed His greatest favor on mankind by sending His last and final prophet to them. His extreme kindness towards human beings is also evident from the following verse:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures.³⁴

The human beings and especially the People of Book were, therefore, obliged to express their gratitude towards the Almighty for bestowing His mercy on them. It is, however, strange that the People of Book had taken him as the foremost opponent of their faith. The fact is that as the final prophet of the Lord, Muhammad ﷺ did not claim to be founder of a new religion. He frankly announced that he came to restore the essentials of the faith of the Prophets of the Lord preceding him. As bearer of the final message from the Lord, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was also bound to remove all corruptions in the law and faith to complete and finalize the religion so that the true message of the Lord may remain accessible to the human beings for all times to come. The Qur'an had upheld all the true teachings of the

³³ Al-Qur'an, 3:164 Yusuf Ali.

³⁴ Al-Qur'an 21:107 Yousuf Ali.

prophets preceding Muhammad ﷺ. It also absolved the Prophets from the blemishes fabricated by their enemies. In view of the above, the Israelites as well as the Jews should have appreciated the teachings and reforms introduced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ ardently. Only the stiff-necked and ill-fated persons can afford to reject the mercy of the Lord in the shape of the Holy Prophet Muhammad

ﷺ •

Perfection of Law as Special Assignments of the Promised Prophet ﷺ

The prayer of Abraham for raising a prophet among his progeny at Makkah also included the purpose to rehearse signs of the Lord, to teach them wisdom and The Book and to sanctify them. Consequently, the Almighty revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ the Qur'an which is full of the instructions of the Almighty to rehearse faith and law of the Lord to them. The Prophet ﷺ also served as the role model of rectitude to be imitated by his followers. He had multipharious assignments covering almost all aspects of life. He had to complete the law and to implement the same in his presence. He also had to lead the Muslims in all fields of life including recitation of Qur'an and its exposition, prayers, fasting, Zakat, Hajj, leading in the battles against the infidels and providing the Muslims with the codes of the war. Besides many other things, he taught the Muslims to deal with the slaves kindly and to manumit them as one of the most virtuous deeds. Similarly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ preached a kind and loving treatment with the women and advised the Muslims to take them as their equals as per the verdict of the Qur'an that **men as well as women are 'members, one of another'** (3:195). Besides this, we can find many verses in the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ in various matters relating to women. In short the Holy Prophet ﷺ conveyed to his followers the guidance that was necessary to complete God's blessings on humankind. One of such verse is quoted below:

مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ .

Allah doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and **to complete His favour to you**, that ye may be grateful.³⁵

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had done his job so excellently that during the Hajja-tul-Wada the Almighty confirmed that:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا. (...)

(...) This Day have I perfected your Religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam As your religion. (...).³⁶

The afore-stated verse was, therefore, a certificate from the Almighty that the faith, law and teachings of Islam had been perfected by the time of Hajjat-ul-Wada. No new precept of faith or law could be added to the Qur'an or to the faith or conduct of Muslim community.

As discussed earlier the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to perfect and implement the law including the law relating to women. We shall, therefore, be summarizing some of the reforms introduced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to improve the destiny of women in the forthcoming part of the book. Women in Islam enjoy divinely ordained duties as well as rights which remain unchangeable for all times to come. According to natural division of labor women have to look after the home and children besides providing comfort to their spouses including sex. They also have to bear the consequences of sex and bring up the children till they grow up to look after themselves. As against this, women in the West and other communities continued to be oppressed and exploited throughout the history. Writing in the year 1981, Mr. Murtada Mutahhari observed that:

Western woman, half a century ago, was the most unfortunate woman in the world. Even in the matter of her own property, she required the guardianship of her husband. Occidentals themselves admit that in the Middle Ages eastern woman was

³⁵ Ibid, 5:6 Yusuf Ali.

³⁶ Ibid, 5:3 Yusuf Ali.

far better off than western woman.³⁷

It is evident from the above that Christianity or the western society did not acknowledge women as respectable or independent persons up to the 2nd quarter of the 20th century. **It took them more than 1300 years to learn from the Muslim world about an honorable treatment with the female sex.**³⁸ Women had to start the struggle during the industrial revolution in the West to fight for their rights. We can, therefore, conclude that any rights the women possess today in the West had been the outcome of their prolonged and constant efforts, protests and even blood sacrifices to win the same.

It is an admitted fact that due to the nature of their creation, women can get no relief from the duties imposed on them by the Almighty. Besides providing sexual satisfaction to their male-partners, they also have to go through the period of their pregnancy, to look after the house and to rear the children. Instead of giving any concession to them for their natural obligations and assignments, the western men have very cleverly pushed them into the market to compete with men in almost all fields of life to contribute to the overall earnings of the families. For this, they granted them freedom to move anywhere in search of their jobs or to perform their duties in the best clothing they can afford. It is, however, a pity that in most of the employments, women get lesser remunerations as compared to men. As such, the so called freedom and welfare of women has made them subject to additional burden of work which formerly had been the sole responsibility of the males. Men, therefore, have cleverly shifted half of their duties to women under the pretension of granting them freedom and equality only to get relief from their own work and leisure hours for their enjoyment. The Contribution of women helps the West to adopt somewhat higher standards of living at the cost of ignoring the children, unbelievable sexual exploitation and

³⁷ Murtada Mutrahhari, p. 332.

³⁸ The readers are also advised to go through the observation of the French polymath Gustave Le Bone reproduced by us in the chapter titled '*Allegations of Sensuality against the Prophet ﷺ*'.

degradation at the hands of male bosses and colleagues in the offices and the factories. In this respect, the condition of women becomes worse in the countries where they exceed in numbers over the males. Both men and women are working like machines, day and night which is speedily destroying their family life and feelings of love between its members. On this subject one can find hundreds of books describing decreasing inclination towards married life causing exploitation of women in various ways throughout the Western World.

MIRACULOUS DECADE OF THE MISSIONARY LIFE

From the history of faith available today, we find that Adam had been the first prophet of the Lord who lived approximately for 930/1000 years on Earth. He, therefore, had a long time to acquaint his descendants with the Almighty, and His attributes. Adam had been the first human being to receive guidance from the Almighty to impart the faith in the Lord and human duties towards Him. While placing Adam on Earth, the Almighty had revealed to him that:

We said: "Get ye down all from here; and if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."³⁹

Adam and Prophets among his descendants like Seth and Enoch had, therefore, been providing guidance to the People till the advent of Noah.

According to the Bible, the next most important prophet of the Lord had been Noah who was born in the 9th generation from Adam. He too lived for about 1000 years on earth. Noah can be taken as the first lawgiver, the segments of whose teachings can be found in various religious scriptures and writings extant today. Skipping over the great prophets like Hud and Swaleh, we pause at Abraham who according to the consensus of the modern scholars lived during 2510 BH i.e. 1813 BC and 2325 BH i.e. 1644 BCE. The Lord has mentioned Abraham among the followers of Noah. He said:

Verily among those who followed his Way was Abraham.⁴⁰

Abraham lived for about 175 years on Earth. Since the Almighty had given him the rectitude during the earliest period of his life⁴¹, from his early childhood he had started

³⁹ Al-Qur'an 2:38 Yousuf Ali.

⁴⁰ Al-Qur'an 37:83 Yousuf Ali.

⁴¹ Al-Qur'an 21:51, 6:71-82.

preaching his father and the people not to worship anyone except the Lord and to refrain from worshipping the idols. He might, therefore, have preached his people for more than 150 years. All the prophets of the Lord after Abraham had been from his descendants guided by the Lord to follow the faith and pattern of Abraham. Moses too was one of the followers of Abraham who might have devoted about 80 years out of his life span of 120 years to preach and to guide the Israelites about faith, law and rituals of the religion. We, however, know for certain that all the prophets sent by the Almighty had been strict monotheists following the teachings of their predecessors and preaching as well as implementing the faith for sufficiently long time. Moses was the only lawgiver among the Israelites. Thousands of prophets after him continued to rehearse and revive the teachings of faith and Law of Moses. Ultimately, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ happened to be the last warners from the Almighty to exhort the Israelites to repent from their sins and to turn to Him obediently for their salvation in the Hereafter. Both John and Jesus had short periods of 3 to 5 years each to call the people towards the Lord. They, therefore, did their best to fulfill the responsibility assigned to them by the Lord.

As regards the responsibility of the ancient prophets to foretell about the advent of the Promised Prophet ﷺ in accordance with their covenant with the Almighty, (Al-Qur'an 3:81) we believe that all of them must have been fulfilling their duties appropriately. We, however, do not find any written reference about the advent of the prophet of the covenant prior to Abraham. It was he who while raising the walls of Ka'aba at Makkah had implored the Lord to send his Prophet ﷺ for guidance of the progeny of Abraham there. Reference to the same has already been made in the preceding chapter of this book. After Abraham, therefore, we find Jacob, Moses, Jeremiah and Jesus Christ clearly prophesying about the advent of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and finality of the Prophethood in him.

Consequently, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was born at Makkah in about 570 of the Christian Era. He had a life span of 63 lunar years on Earth. The Almighty gave him the first call of his mission at the age of 40 lunar years. He continued to stay and preach at Makkah for the next 13 years of his missionary period whereafter due to the severest opposition

from the polytheists, he had to migrate to Medina at a distance of about 456 kms from Makkah.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ devoted the first 13 years of his missionary life to preach faith in the Almighty at Makkah. Besides revealing the attributes of the Lord to the people, he also preached them to abstain from worshiping the idols. This was the period during which the Holy Prophet ﷺ prepared a team with the firm faith in the Almighty as well as the prophet. The selfless pious and sanctified group of believers, therefore, continued to form the core of the Muslim community to devote everything to worship the Lord and to obey the Prophet ﷺ wholeheartedly. Ever-increasing number of the righteous and god-fearing devotees, therefore, caused extreme annoyance to the polytheists who resorted to extreme cruel treatments with those who were unable to defend themselves. There were serious threats even to the lives of the Holy Prophet and his companions. Finding no further prospects for expansion of faith at Makkah, therefore, the Holy Prophet and his companions decided to migrate to Medina where they could foresee lesser resistance than at Makkah.

Unluckily, the circumstances at Medina became more severe as compared to those at Makkah. Muslims did not enjoy any secure life against the assaults from the pagans of Makkah. The three most important invasions on Medina i.e. the Battle of Badr, Battle of Uhud and the Battle of Trench had been arranged by the people of Makkah and their animosity continued to increase up to the conquest of Makkah in Ramzan 8 AH. Besides 73 expeditions led by the companions of the Prophet ﷺ the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself had to lead 28 of the battles to defend the Muslim community. The earliest Muslim community, therefore, enjoyed no safe and secure time during the entire lifetime of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at Medina. They also suffered from extreme shortage of sources especially in respect of their sustenance and housing facilities at Medina. The continuing wars had also created a problem of the restoration of the helpless and home-less widows of the martyres and divorcees of the non-Muslims requiring immediate succor from the destitution and restoration of their social status in the community.

Although primary precepts of faith and law had been imparted to the believers during their stay at Makkah yet the strictest prohibitions and implementation of the law of recompense and punishment was made mostly at Medina. This period was, therefore, the prime time depicting fulfillment of the prophecy of Moses in the following:

And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: **from his right hand went a fiery law for them.**⁴²

To implement the fiery law just within ten years time was, therefore, an extremely difficult assignment of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It would, therefore, have been impossible for any human being to fulfill the same without miraculous aid and planning of the Almighty to get all the reformation and law implemented within this short span of ten years at Medina. All the teachings of faith and rituals of the religion were demonstrated in the practical form among the community. People, therefore, had no confusion about Zakat, Sadaqat fasting and prayers mandatory as well as optional to worship the Lord. Battles for defense and expansion of Islam were fought under the direct supervision of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Muslims, therefore, became fully aware of the codes of the conduct of war and dealing with the slaves male or female. It was during this time that the Holy Prophet ﷺ provided perfect defence to the Muslim community, conquered almost entire Arabian lands extending over more than one million square miles with the minimum possible losses of life and property. Consequently, a team of about 300,000 devotees including men, women and children had been prepared to preach the faith in the Almighty and to achieve utmost success in each and every field of life.

Marital reforms had perhaps been one of the most conspicuous developments to introduce affectionate and congenial treatment with women whether mothers, wives, sisters, daughters or the slaves as the specific characteristic of the Muslim society. A major part of the present volume is, therefore, devoted to highlight the the

⁴² Deu 33:2 KJV.

reforms made by the Prophet ﷺ to improve the fate of women throughout the world and his personal initiative in the same.

Shelter and Sustenance for the Helpless

Divine guidance had always been provided to human beings so that they may refrain from the evils of fornication, incest or rape. Islam did not approve virginity or celibacy as a precondition to Godliness. It stressed on marriage of all men who could afford the same and marriage of women who could find suitable husbands for them. Islam was also much concerned about the remarriage of widows and the divorcees who were suffering from various prohibitions in the world. As against this, Islam incited and inspired the believers to provide shelter and sustenance to the helpless, widows or the divorcees. Instead of discarding them as ill-fated, cursed and polluted women Islam took great care to absorb them as respectable, chaste and useful members of the Muslim society to avoid its division into the 'haves and have-nots' as propagated by the socialist leaders. Islam too had no provision for bifurcation of the community into the Brahmans and the condemned castes like the Shudras, the Dalits or the Untouchables etc. as in the Indian Hindu society. Unluckily the widows, divorcees certain aged unmarried women also used to be counted among the aforestated classes throughout the world. The Almighty, therefore, sent His promised prophet to guide human beings to the straight path towards the Almighty and to establish a class-less society on Earth free from all types of corruption, coercion, exploitation and wretchedness. It was to that end that out of 11 women married by the Holy Prophet ﷺ only Aisha had been a virgin while all others were either divorcees or the widows as has been described in the life account of each of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. Besides this, Maria Qibtiyyah might also have been a virgin slave girl before her marriage with the Prophet ﷺ but with the birth of her son Abraham, she used to be counted among regular wives of the Prophet ﷺ. All these

arrangements were, therefore, made 'to put evil away' from the women in the world.

The reforms made by the Holy Prophet ﷺ also included removal of the constraint on the marriage of a priest with a divorcee or a widow. Similarly, he removed the prohibition on remarriage of the widows or the divorcees as was practised in various societies. Cousin marriage was made legal by him by marrying Zaynab his first cousin. Zaid b. Haritha, the emancipated slave and adopted son of Muhammad ﷺ was married firstly to Durrah b. Abi Lahab a cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The marriage stood dissolved due to Zaid's conversion to Islam. Zaid was then married to **Umm Aiman** an Abyssinian slave girl of Abdullah b. Abdul Mutlib who also had acted as 2nd mother of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This, therefore, was a marriage between the adopted son of Muhammad ﷺ with his foster mother. The same Zaid was, thereafter, married to Zainab bint Jahsh the first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ but being unable to pull on with her Zaid had divorced her. To introduce reforms in the law of Jahiliyyah, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ married Zainab who was not only his first cousin but also the divorcee of his ex-slave and adoptive son. Such instances depict Zaid as an important figure to introduce reforms in the marital laws among the Muslims.

As stated earlier, the Lord never left humankind without guidance from Him. The Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had been the prophet of the Lord raised among the people of Arabia to lead all the nations towards صراط مستقيم (the straight path). To restore the true religion in its pristine purity, the Almighty also revealed the Qur'an through him so that the people may not be misled by the corruptions made by human hands in the scriptures sent before the Qur'an. Although the Almighty had bestowed a great favor on humankind yet instead of seeking guidance from the prophet, both the Jews and the Christians had been striving hard to find some faults in the teachings of the Qur'an or in the character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. They, therefore, made hectic efforts to criticize or deride the Qur'an by perverting the meanings of its verses to support their own conviction. Similarly, they had been making mountain of a molehill about the events of the life of the Prophet ﷺ wherever they could scandalize him. All such negative interpretations of the teachings of Islam and false

accusations against the Holy Prophet ﷺ aimed at defiling the most beautiful image of Islam. The Jewish scholars and had been concealing the contents of the Bible to accuse the prophet for various traditions that abound in their own scriptures. It was their eagerness to berate the Holy Prophet ﷺ that they had to pretend their utter ignorance from the history and faith in the Bible. F. D. Cummins, therefore, highlights the aforestated fact in the ending passage of his article on Muhammad ﷺ in the following manner:

Of all great leaders, none has been so much maligned as Mohammed. Many of his detractors have called him an arch-imposter, an accusation to which his tremendous achievement gives the lie. Only a man of burning sincerity, utter integrity, could have established a faith which today draws more converts than any other religion.⁴³

Had the missionaries of the Jews and the Christians cared to compare the teachings of the Qur'an and the conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with the prophets of the Lord preceding him, they could not have dared to utter such derogatory remarks against the promised prophet of the Lord. They will, therefore, be required to account for the disinformation spread by them in spite of the stern warning of the Lord as quoted below:

He will speak in my name, and I will punish anyone who refuses to obey him. (Deu 18:19 GNB)

Most active among the adversaries of Islam had been the Christian missionaries and the so-called orientalist sponsored by various governments or semi-government organizations who had been assigned the task of criticizing the Qur'an or the life of the Holy Prophet to prevent Christians from converting to Islam. Their biased findings, therefore, provided them and their readers with an excuse

⁴³ 100 Great Kings, Queens and Rulers of the World, ed. John Canning, p. 191.

to deny the truth of the final message of the Almighty. One of their allegations had been that it was due to the increasing sex and sensuality of the Prophet ﷺ that he married 9 or 10 wives after his marriage with Sayyida Aishah. In their eagerness to malign the promised prophet of the Lord, they willfully pretend utter oblivion about the history of the faith and the prophets being rehearsed in the church. As such, after denial of their own scriptures they cannot entertain any other evidence or reasoning to determine the truth. Hence, deserting these stiff-necked people to their own fate, we proceed to unmask the truth only for the benefit of the sane minded impartial readers in the world. We hope the fair minded people will have no hesitation to appreciate the same.

The non-believers and evil-minded people in the world never gave a serious thought to the preachings of the Prophets of the Lord. Instead of pondering the useful contents of the message from the Almighty, they always tried to deny the veracity of the message or to search for certain shortcomings in the prophet and his message as an excuse to discredit him. History of the perished nations, therefore, contains ample evidence of the denial by the evil doers and their chastisement by the Lord. In the case of Holy Prophet ﷺ too, we find numerous examples of the false allegations leveled by the enemies against the prophet of Islam. In the present context, we shall be limiting only to the accusations against the multiple marriages of the Prophet ﷺ along with the reasons necessitating the same. It may, therefore, be useful for us to familiarize our readers with the briefest life account of each of the wives of the prophets and the circumstances leading to their marriages with the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The baseless romance fabricated by such biased writers turns out to be absolutely incorrect provided one analyzes the facts in the actual background of the same. It is, however, strange that the Jewish as well as Christian scholars and the orientalist take such stories for granted and continue to repeat the same stereotype allegations against the Qur'an and the promised prophet of the Lord. Consequently, numerous books of the Orientalists, the priests and scholars from the Christian and the Jewish writers are available in the market criticizing the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a bitter manner. We,

therefore, tried to answer many of their aspersions wherever had they been relevant to the topic being discussed by us. In the present book, therefore, we shall be clearing off the allegations about sensuality, paedophilia or polygamy etc. concocted by the enemies of Islam against the personality declared as bearer of the most “exalted standard of character” by the Almighty himself.

Denunciation of Women

Although women had been serving as full partners of men during all times yet in the Bible and the literature of the Western world, we find some of the prophets and almost all the scholars of the West denouncing women by making extremely derogatory remarks against them. We have, therefore, devoted first four chapters of our book '***Islam as Emancipator of Women***'⁴⁴ to provide the readers with a glimpse of mal-treatment and denunciation of women specially in the Western part of the world. As against them, Muhammad ﷺ was the only Prophet in the world who established equity of rights among men and women as human beings and independent persons in the society. While the philosophers and sages of the old had been deprecating the women by one way or the other, Muhammad ﷺ was the only prophet of the Lord who openly confessed his love and respect for the female sex. He did not feel shy to utter that:

Two things of your world were made lovely to me, perfume and women; and the coolness of my eyes is in prayer.⁴⁵

Most of the communities had been treating women as nonentities in the religious affairs. Even the wives of the Prophets or great saints had no part to play in the religious

⁴⁴ These chapters are titled '*Plight of Women in the World*', '*Denunciation of Women*', '*Condemnation and Deprivation of Women*' and '*Women, Christianity and the West*'

⁴⁵ Abdurrahman Ahmed bin Shu'aib, *Sunan Nasai* (Urdu), (Lahore: Zia-ul-Qur'an Publications, 2012), Vol. III, p. 85, Hadith No. 3877.

teachings or rituals at the temples. In the Solomon's temple for example, females could not go beyond women's hall which was behind the chamber of lepers and chamber of oil and wines. Only the chambers of Nazirites and the chamber of wood lay behind the courtyard of the women. Women had no part to play in the rituals of the temple due to which they had no access to its main parts. None of them could get near the Holy of Holies. No narrative from the wives of the prophets is on record in the Bible to describe how the prophets treated their wives and children and how much time did they devote to rest, personal affairs or prayers at home. Similarly, there is no information pertaining to the problems faced by women. Women were usually treated as defiled and neglected persons. The Israelites had been so strict regarding cleanliness that their women stood separated from the beds or homes of their husbands to live like animals in the dingy or secluded places away from home. Women had been ignored to such an extent that the New Testament had no reference about the life and character of Holy Mary the Mother of Jesus Christ. Although certain passing remarks about Mary are available in the text yet we find no respect accorded to her. Perhaps the last reference to her had been in the acts 1:26, where she had been reported among those who were in the upper room. After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, however, we find no mention of her in the scriptures or in the writings of the earliest fathers of Christianity. The Wikipedia, therefore, contains that:

From this time, she disappears from the biblical accounts, although it is held by Catholics that she is again portrayed as the heavenly woman of Revelation.[Rev 12:1] Her death is not recorded in the scriptures, but Catholic and Orthodox tradition and doctrine have her assumed (taken bodily) into Heaven. Belief in the corporeal assumption of Mary is a dogma of the Catholic Church, in the Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches alike, and is believed as well by the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Coptic Orthodox Church, and parts of the Anglican Communion and Continuing Anglican movement.⁴⁶

There is hardly any report from Mary about bringing up Jesus or a narrative from her describing the events about his early life. She was alive and present at Jerusalem at the

⁴⁶ *Wikipedia*, s.v. Mary Mother of Jesus.

time of the crucifixion of Jesus but no Gospel except John mentioned the same. It was John who narrated that:

25. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. **26.** When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, **Woman, behold thy son!** **27.** Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.⁴⁷

Obviously '*woman, behold thy son!*' does not show any respect or politeness of Jesus towards his mother. The Qur'an, however, rebuts the rudeness alleged to Jesus by quoting his own words to confess bounties of the Lord. Jesus confessed that:

32. And (hath made me) dutiful toward her who bore me, and hath not made me arrogant, unblest.⁴⁸

The Gospels, the apostles and the Disciples seem to have forgotten Mary for centuries after the crucifixion. There is no report from Mary about any act of Jesus Christ. The Christians also do not know how long she lived and where did she die. Scholars have a vague idea about certain places where she might have lived but none of them has any definite knowledge of her abode or place of death. It was perhaps during the medieval centuries that worship and remembrance of Mary had been revived through the visions of certain damsels or men. **The new era had, thereafter, been attaching more importance to the visions than to the teachings and revelations in the Bible.** Instead of taking scriptures as the foundation of their faith the Christian masses today are guided by the teachings of the church and visions of their saints.

Islam is perhaps the first religion which grants equal rights and respects to the genders. Women participate with men in all matters relating to worship of the Lord. Wives of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were venerated by all the

⁴⁷ Joh 19:25-27 KJV.

⁴⁸ Al-Qur'an 19:31-32 (Muhammad M. Pikthal).

believers as their own mothers. Men as well as women used to consult them on various traditions about the laws relating to women and the private life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Life account of each and every wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been preserved by the historians as nicely as they could. About one third of the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ have been quoted through them. Ayesha had preserved and narrated 2210 Ahadith, Umm-e-Salamah 378, Umm-e-Habibah 65, Maimoonah bint Harith 76 while there had been many others to narrate Ahadith in smaller numbers.

Since women were suffering from various man-made laws, the Holy Prophet ﷺ introduced great reforms to improve the status, the position and treatment with the female sex. For this purpose, the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself had to act as an exemplar for all matters where other people were shrinking from the same due to bitter criticism of the non-believers and the hypocrites. **Perhaps no one except him could have dared to marry the woman divorced by his adopted son and the ex-slave to remove prohibition of Jahiliyyah about the widow or divorcee of one's adopted son.** The Prophet's marriage with Zainab involved not only marriage with a cousin but also with the wife of an ex-slave. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had to marry her only to abrogate the traditions of Jahiliyyah and to make the same to accord with the law of the Lord.

Islam strongly prohibited any sex out of the wed-lock and ascribed severest punishments to the violators of the law. This includes homosexuality as a capital crime against the Lord punishable like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah about whom the Bible reported that:

24. Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; **25.** And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.⁴⁹

The Qur'an also endorsed similar punishment to those people about whom God said:

⁴⁹ Gen 19:24-25 KJV.

And We turned (the cities) upside down, and rained down on them brimstones hard as baked clay.⁵⁰

82. When Our Decree issued, We turned (the cities) upside down, and rained down on them brimstones hard as baked clay, spread, layer on layer,- **83.** Marked as from thy Lord: Nor are they ever far from those who do wrong!⁵¹

Besides being a violation of the Divine Law, homosexuality also involved an offence or crime against the nature of creation. The offenders, therefore, had been chastised with the severest punishment from the sky. Stoning to death had been the punishment of the adulterous persons in the Law of Moses (عليه السلام).⁵² Islam endorsed the same law with certain reforms also to cover the unmarried individuals. All these punishments aimed at elimination of corruption and perversion in the society.

⁵⁰ Al-Qur'an 15:74 Yusuf Ali.

⁵¹ Al-Qur'an 11:82-83 Yusuf Ali.

⁵² Deu. 22:21-24.

WIVES OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

Marriages of the Prophet ﷺ

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had married 11 women at different times during his life. We shall, therefore, be giving a brief life account of 9 wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the present chapter while the life accounts of Sayyida Aishah and Sayyida Zaynab bint Jahsh shall be given separately. Treating both the nobilities separately has been necessitated firstly due to certain marital reforms introduced through marriages with them and to refute certain scandalous observations of the enemies of Islam involving the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. We hope the facts brought on record may help the fair minded people to arrive at the truth. We, therefore, start from the account of Sayyida Khadijah in the following:

1. Sayyadah Khadijah bint Khuwailid

Sayyadah Khadijah was the daughter of Khuwaylid bin Asad bin Abdul Uzza bin **Qusai bin Kilab**. As compared to her lineage, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was son of Abdullah bin Abdul Mutlib bin Hashim bin Abd Munaf bin Qusai bin Kilab. **Qusai**, therefore, was the common ancestor of Sayyida Khadijah as well as the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Besides being a leader of his tribe, Khuwaylid the father of Khadijah was a rich merchant of Makkah. He enjoyed prominence, prestige and high rank among the Quraysh. Khuwaylid had married Fatima bint Za'idah ibn al-Asam ibn Emir ibn Lu'ayy. Fatima's Mother was Halah bint Abd Munaf ibn al-Harith who had been a hero of Quraysh in the pre-Islamic days. Khuwaylid had been a wealthy merchant of Makkah. Sayyida Khadijah inherited not only the wealth but also the business acumen from her father. Besides this, she was famous for the purity of her soul and chastity to such an extent that she was known as 'Khadijah Tahirah'

meaning Khadijah the chaste woman even earlier to her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

At the age of 15 years, Khadijah was married to Abu Hala bin Zarara At-Taimi. She bore him two sons i.e. Hind and Halah. After the death of her first husband i.e. Abu Halah, Sayyidah Khadijah married 'Ateeq bin 'A'iz, a leader of Banu Makhzum. Atiq also died sometime after his marriage with her. She bore him a daughter who too was named Hind. Both the sons of Khadijah mentioned above and her daughter Hind embraced Islam and died as devout followers of the Prophet of Islam ﷺ. Due to her piety and wealth, some of the prominent leaders of Quraish such as Abu Jahl, Abu Sufyan, Uqba bin Abi Mui, and Salat bin abi Yahab offered to marry Khadijah, the widow but she politely refused all of them.⁵³

Khadijah was a wealthy business woman, who used to send her Caravans of trade to Yemen and to Al-Sham (Palestine and Syria). She had been employing some of her relatives and slaves to look after her business and to take her caravans of goods to different areas. Learning about the uprightness, and business acumen of Muhammad ﷺ, Khadijah requested him to take her caravan of goods to Sham (Syria & Palestine). Accepting the proposal, the young man took a Caravan to Al Shaam in the company of Maysarah a slave of Khadijah. He came back with profit much greater than all the expectations of Khadijah. Besides reporting the excellence of character of Muhammad ﷺ the slave boy also stated having witnessed a cloud moving at Muhammad's movement to protect him from the blaze of sun. He told the lady that when they were sitting under the shade of a tree adjacent to the cell of a Rabbi, the Rabbi disclosed that **"This Man is one of the Prophets"**.⁵⁴ During the same period, Khadijah had a vision that the sun descended upon her house and filled it with light. She saw the light spread from there to the whole Earth. Khadijah hastened to Waraqa bin Nofal her cousin who was known as a scholarly person and a pious man of Makkah. She requested him to interpret the dream. Learning about the same, Waraqa said **"O' Cousin! Be delighted at the**

⁵³ Tehran: World Organization for Islamic Services, p. 65.

⁵⁴ Muhammad Fathi Mus'ad, *The Wives of the Prophet Muhammad*, (Islamic Inc. at Assayida Zaynab Sq., Cairo, Egypt), p. 9.

anticipated good affair. If Allah renders your vision true the light of Prophethood will enter your house."⁵⁵

Impressed by the nobility, sagacity, uprightness and pre-figuration about Muhammad ﷺ, Khadijah offered herself in marriage to him through her friend Nafisa bint Munabbah. The Messenger of Allah accepted the offer and went to her with his uncles Hamzah and Abu Talib. Khadijah's uncle, Amr bin Asad and her cousin Waraqa bin Nofal wedded her to Muhammad ﷺ. **Khadijah then was about 40 years while Muhammad himself was just 25 years old.** In spite of the difference in age, he proved to be a loyal and affectionate husband while Khadijah also proved to be an exemplary wife for him. Khadijah bore the Prophet ﷺ 7 children. These included three sons i.e. Al-Qasim, Abdullah (Tahir) and Tayyab.⁵⁶ He also had four daughters named Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm-e-Kulthum, and Fatima. **The birth of Fatima in the 10th year of the marriage between Khadijah and the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ therefore, coincided with the rebuilding of Kaabah by Quraysh and placement of Black Stone in it by him.** It is evident from the above that with the only exception of Ibrahim a son born from Mariyah Qibtiah in Medina in 8 A.H., all the sons and daughters of the Prophet ﷺ were born of Khadijah.

Fifteen years after his marriage with Khadijah, Muhammad ﷺ had attained the age of 40 years when he received the Divine call at cave Hira near Makkah intimating him that he was the messenger of Allah. Khadijah had the unique privilege to be the first one among all the human beings to convert to Islam. For about ten years after the first revelation, Khadijah continued to support the Prophet ﷺ through thick and thin. She spent her entire wealth in charity and to uphold the cause of Islam. Besides this, Khadijah used to do entire housework herself without hiring a servant. This also aimed at preparing her daughters for

⁵⁵ Muhammad Fathi Mus'ad, *The Wives of the Prophet Muhammad*, p. 10.

⁵⁶ Some of the scholars believe that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had only two sons i.e. Qasim and Abdullah. The 2nd son was also known as Tayyib and Tahir.

their household duties in future. She had been a great source of affection, encouragement and consolation to the Prophet ﷺ till her death. Her life with the Prophet ﷺ, therefore, serves as role model of love, piety and devotion to be imitated by all the believing women after her.

After living a faithful and happy married life for about 25 years with him, Khadijah the beloved wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ died at Makkah in the month of Ramadhan 10th Nabvi i.e. in April or May 620 CE. She as such had been the only wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for about 25 years. She was buried in the graveyard known as *Jannat-al-Mualla* at Makkah. Qasim and Tayyab/ Tahir the sons of Muhammad ﷺ had died during the lifetime of Khadijah. Two eldest daughters of the Holy Prophet ﷺ i.e. Zainab and Ruqayya had already been married while two younger daughters i.e. Umm-e-Kalthum and Fatimah needed further lookafter till their marriage.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ loved Khadijah so much that he did not even think of marrying any other woman during her life. Even after her death he did not forget to remember her again and again with admiration and love. Ali bin Abu Talib reported from the Prophet ﷺ that he said:

Narrated 'Ali: I heard the Prophet saying, "Mary, the daughter of 'Imran, was the best among the women (of the world of her time) and Khadijah is the best amongst the women (of this nation).⁵⁷

The Prophet ﷺ used to mention about the excellence of the character of Khadijah so frequently that it aroused jealousy among his wives e.g.

Narrated 'Aysha: I did not feel jealous of any woman as much as I did of Khadijah because Allah's Apostle used to mention her very often. **He married me after three years of her death, and his Lord (or Gabriel) ordered him to give her the good news of having a palace of Qasab in Paradise.**⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 4, Book 55, Hadith No. 642.

⁵⁸ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 5, Book 58, Hadith No. 165.

Khadijah had been sharing all the sufferings, afflictions and persecutions at the hands of the nonbelievers at Makkah with great patience. She always continued to provide the necessary comfort, luxury and support during the adversities of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Pleased with the high quality of the conduct of Khadijah, the Almighty sent His special greetings for her through Jibrael who descended towards the Prophet ﷺ addressing him that:

O Allah's Messenger! This is Khadijah coming to you with a dish having meat soup (or some food or drink). When she reaches you, greet her on behalf of her LORD (i.e. Allah) and on my behalf, and give her the glad tidings of having a house in Paradise where in there will be neither any noise nor any fatigue (trouble).⁵⁹

Khadijah, therefore, enjoys the unique distinction to be the only lady on Earth ever greeted by the LORD due to her piety and devotion towards Him.

Although Khadijah was 15 years older than the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and had suffered from widowhood twice before her marriage with him yet she had been the most beloved wife of the messenger of Allah. The record of the married life between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Khadijah leaves the most beautiful pattern of the ideal relationship between a husband and his wife. The believers may, therefore, follow the said pattern to fulfill the requirements of the Divine Commandment as follows:

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.⁶⁰

Incidentally, the Holy Prophet's marriage with Khadijah even before the start of his prophetic mission introduced the reform in the matrimonial relationships to ameliorate the fate of widows and the divorcees in the world. Widows before Islam used to be stigmatized as profane, cursed, ill-

⁵⁹ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Manaqib al-Ansar, vol. 7, p. 166, Hadith No. 3820.

⁶⁰ Al-Qur'an 33:21 Yusuf Ali.

fated, hapless and desolate in all the human communities including the People of the Book. Their eligibility for remarriage was almost nil. Widows and divorcees being despised by the society had no chances to seek shelter or sustenance for themselves or their children. **Even in the Hindu Law, the remarriage of widows was akin to adultery:**

Marriage according to Hindu Law is a sacrament and in theory the tie is indissoluble. The remarriage of widows especially in the higher classes, therefore, is looked upon with disfavour by the lawgivers as being something akin to adultery. Such marriages were held invalid and the offspring of such marriages held to be illegitimate.⁶¹

The condemnation of widows in the Torah had also been universal than sporadic. Judaism expressly forbade their priests to marry any widow other than the widow of a priest.

Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before.⁶²

The book of Leviticus enjoins the High Priests that:

And he shall take a wife in her virginity. **A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take:** but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.⁶³

By mentioning the widows and divorcees with the profane and the harlots, the Torah imposed a great debasement and degradation to the innocent women suffering from widowhood or divorce. The high priests had specially been forbidden to approach them. Muhammad ﷺ seems to be the only prophet who even before receipt of his call had married Khadijah who had been widowed twice. Subsequently, in his capacity as the last one and the leader

⁶¹ *Woman's Plight*, p. 133, quoted from Gedge, Evelyn C., *Women in Modern India*: (Bombay: Kitab Mehel, 1929), p. 128-129.

⁶² Eze 44:22 KJV.

⁶³ Lev 21:13-14 KJV.

of all the prophets of the LORD, he was undoubtedly the highest priest of the LORD on earth. He, therefore, took the initiative to abrogate the unauthentic injunctions in the Torah regarding the fate of divorced women and the widows who were taken as ill-fated and defiled women in almost all the societies of the world. **His marriage with Khadijah, therefore, revokes the prohibitions for the priests to marry the widows** (Eze 44:22 & Lev 21:13-14 quoted above). By marrying Khadijah the widow, he restored the sanctity, the nobility and the social status of women as widows and the divorcees throughout the world. Even the subsequent traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ affirm that no profanity, doom or curse is attached to the widows or the divorcees. They are eligible to marry even the holiest among the prophets and the highest priests on Earth. As such, **Islam is the only religion in the world which does not condemn the widows or the divorcees unless and until certain criminal conduct such as fornication stands proved against them.**

2. Sawdah Bint Zam'a

She was Sawdah bint Zam'a bin Qais bin Abd Shams bin Abd Wadd bin Nasar, bin Malik bin Hasal bin Aamr bin Lu'ayy bin Ghalib⁶⁴. Thus her lineage meets with that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at Lu'ayy bin Ghalib. Her mother was ash-Shamoos bint Qays ibn Zayd, the niece of Salma bint Amr ibn Zayd, the mother of Abd al-Mutlib. **Sawda, as such, was one of the high born ladies of Quraysh.**

Unluckily, in spite of her noble descent, Sawda had been a poor young girl when she married As-Sakran bin 'Amr at Makkah. Being closely related to the Prophet ﷺ, she became one of the earliest converts to Islam along with Al-Sakraan. Due to severe persecution of the believers at the hands of the non-believers at Makkah, the couple had to migrate to Abyssinia twice along with other Muslims. Al-Sakran developed illness during the second migration to Abyssinia and the precarious condition of Al Sakran forced

⁶⁴ Urdu Daira-e-Maarif Islamiya (Islamic Encyclopaedia Urdu), 2nd Edition, Vol. 11, s.v. 'Sawda bint Zamaa'.

the family to return to Makkah. Al-Sakran died a short time after reaching Makkah leaving behind Sawdah as a widow with four children. Since, Khadijah, the wife of the Prophet ﷺ had already died, he too was a widower at the time.

Khadijah had left behind four daughters. Her eldest daughter i.e. Zaynab had been married to her cousin Abu-al-Aas while her second daughter Ruqayya had been married to Sayyidina Uthman bin Affan during the life time of Khadijah. The Holy Prophet had, therefore, been left alone. There was no one to look after the house and to groom his two younger daughters i.e. Umm-e-Kalthoom and Fatemah. Meanwhile Khawla bint Hakeem, the wife of Uthman bin Maz'un⁶⁵ called on the Prophet ﷺ and suggested him to marry Sawda bint Zam'ah.

Sawda and her former husband Al-Sakran enjoyed the distinction of being counted among the earliest believers in Islam due to which the families of Sakran and Sawda had developed animosity against them. They had, therefore, to migrate twice to Habsha as stated earlier. On return and especially after the death of her husband, Sawda along with four orphan children was living in a miserable condition at Makkah. She, however, was a God-fearing woman famous for her chastity, generosity and purity of soul.

Sawda was a bulky woman of high stature but ordinary face. Although she had little charms for sex and had already passed the age of bearing children yet the Holy Prophet ﷺ preferred her over other women primarily to provide protection to Sawda and the orphans with her. After consent from the Holy Prophet ﷺ Khawla bint Hakeem contacted Zamaa the father of Sawda who married her to the messenger of Allah. **The Prophet ﷺ was then of 50 years and Sawda was about 55 years of Age.** Although Sawda bore no children to him yet the Prophet ﷺ continued to treat her nicely for about 13 years i.e. till his death. Sawda, too, had great love for him and served as

⁶⁵ Uthman bin Maz'un had been a foster-brother (اخو من الرضاة) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He was counted among the first 13 converts to Islam (سابقون الاولون). Besides leading the first emigration, he also joined the 2nd expedition towards Habsha and returned to Makkah after the Hijrah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to Medina. After reaching Medina, he had also joined the Battle of Badr and died due to some ailment soon after the battle. He, therefore, had been the first believer in Islam to be buried at Jannat-ul-Baqee.

a self-less devotee and ideal wife. Sawda, as such, was one and the only wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for about 3 years until Aysha joined him. After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, Sawda lived as an abstemious woman passing most of her time in prayer or recitation of the Qur'an for about 12 years. During her widowhood, she did not leave her house even for Hajj or Umra. She used to work with her own hands to earn for herself and to help the poor. Eventually, she died in the year 22 A.H. at the age of about 80 years.

3. Sayyida Aysha Bint Abu Bakr

Aysha was born in Makkah some years before the call of the Prophet ﷺ. Her father Abdullah bin Uthman known as Abu Bakr Al-Siddique had been the most intimate friend of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the first one among men to believe in Islam. He enjoyed several other distinctions among the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and also had the unique privilege to be declared as a brother of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. After the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, his companions chose Abu Bakr as the first caliph of the Muslims and usually addressed him as Khaleefatu-Rasoolillah. As such, he had been the only successor of the Prophet known as Khalifa-tur-Rasool while other successors such as Umar bin Khattab, Uthman bin Affan and Ali bin Abi Talib used to be addressed as Ameer-ul-Momineen instead of Khalifa-tur-Rasool.

After the death of Sayyida Khadijah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was living a grief stricken life when Khawlah bint Hakeem called on him with the suggestion to marry again. On inquiry from the Prophet ﷺ she told him that she had two proposals in mind. The first one was a Bikrun referring to Hazrat Aysha (Musnad Ahmed).⁶⁶ Abu Bakr the father of Aysha accepted the offer and married Aysha to the Prophet ﷺ in the month of Shawwal in 10 Nabwi i.e. two or three

⁶⁶ There is a difference among the historians on the age of Aysha at the time of her marriage. We have, therefore, devoted our chapters number 5 to 12 to discuss the issue in detail. The readers may kindly go through the same to know the facts.

years before Hijrah. She, however, remained with her parents till the age of 18 or 19 years⁶⁷ after which she joined the Prophet ﷺ at Medina in Shawwal 1 A.H.

4. Sayyida Hafsa Bint Umar

Hafsa was the daughter of Umar bin Al Khattab better known as Umar Al Farooq, the 2nd successor of the Prophet ﷺ. She was born about 5 years before the start of the missionary assignment of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hafsa had been married to Khunais bin Hudhafa Al Sahmi who was one of the earliest converts to Islam. Both husband and wife had migrated to Abyssinia. Khunais had joined the battle of Badr in 2 A.H. in which he had received injuries due to which he died at Medina subsequently.

The Prophet ﷺ had great regard for Umar the father of Hafsa (the widow) who herself was a great devotee of Islam. She also had the distinction of migration to Abyssinia and joining the battle of Badr along with Khunais her husband. After martyrdom of Khunais in Badr she was suffering from desperation of widowhood. To console her and her father, therefore, the Prophet ﷺ married Hafsa after her Idda. **Hafsa had memorized the entire Qur'an by heart during the life of the Prophet.** Similarly, there had been many other companions of the Prophet ﷺ who had committed the Qur'an to memory. A substantial number out of them were martyred in the battle of Al Yamama during the caliphate of Abu Bakr Al-Siddique. He, therefore, advised Zaid bin Thabit to collect the entire Qur'an in one volume to serve as a standard text for the believers. After collection and comparison of the various manuscripts with the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and its certification by all those who had memorized the Qur'an by heart, Zaid prepared the certified text to serve as a standard reference for all the Muslims in the world. This unanimously agreed text was, thereafter, handed over to Hafsa (RA) who served as custodian of the agreed text of the Qur'an. Subsequently, Usman bin Affaan, the 3rd Caliph

⁶⁷ Azwaj e Mutahharat and Sahabat Encyclopedia (Urdu), by Dr. Zulfiqar Kazim, p. 99 has described her of 16 or 17 years while some other historians are of the opinion that she was of about 21 years at the time of consummation of her marriage.

of Islam prepared copies of the certified text of the Qur'an in the custody of Hafsa in about 25 A.H. and sent them to important centers of Islam in Arabia, Egypt, Al Sham, Iran and Iraq etc. to serve as standard and certified text of the Qur'an.

Hafsa had been extremely pious and devoted worshiper of the LORD. She, however, lacked politeness of manners. Incidentally, there developed some estrangement between Hafsa and the Messenger of Allah who was planning to divorce her but he had to revoke the decision on receiving a Divine commandment as quoted below:

The prophet ﷺ said:

Jibrael came to me and said to me: Return Hafsah for she is devoted fasting and standing in prayer at night and she will be your wife in paradise.⁶⁸

Hafsa bore no children to the Prophet ﷺ. She lived for about 35 years after his death and died in 45 A.H. at the age of 60 years.

5. Zaynab bint Khuzaima

She was Zainab bint Khuzaima bin Abdullah bin Umar bin Abd Manaf Bin Hilal bin Aamir bin Sasa. She was one of the earliest converts to Islam. According to Imam Zuhri, Tufail bin Harith bin Abdul Mutlib bin Abd Manaf (the first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) was the first husband of Zaynab but he had either died or divorced her soon after the marriage.⁶⁹ May be she might have been divorced due to her conversion to Islam. Abdul Wahid bin Aon says that after divorce from Tufail bin Harith, Zainab was married to Ubaida bin Harith (brother of Tufail) who was a devout Muslim.⁷⁰ The marriage with Tufail bin Harith seems to have

⁶⁸ Reputed by Al Hakim, Al Tabrani and Ibn Saad on the Authority of Anas.

⁶⁹ *Az waj e Mutahharat and Sahabiya Encyclopedia*, p. 175, 76, *Tabaqat-e-Ibn-e-Saad*, Vol. 8, p. 154, also Wikipedia, Zainab b. Khuzaima.

⁷⁰ *Az waj e Mutahharat and Sahabiya Encyclopedia*, p. 175, 76.

occurred a few years before the boycott of the Meccans against the Hashemites who had confined them to the valley of declivity of Abu Talib (شعب ابى طالب) in 7th Nabvi i.e. 617 A.D. She had 10 children i.e. Muawiya, Awn, Munqidh, Ibrahim, Harith, Rabta, Khadija, Sukhayla, Amina, Safiya from Ubaida b. Harith.⁷¹

During Hijra, Zainab migrated with her husband Ubaida from Makkah to Medina.⁷² Both husband and wife had joined the battle of Badr in 2 A.H. Ubaida received a fatal injury during the duel with Shaybah brother of Utbah bin Rabiyyah during the Battle. After his martyrdom, Zainab married Abdullah bin Jahsh⁷³, the son of the maternal aunt of the Prophet ﷺ. Abdullah, too, was martyred in the Battle of Uhud in 3 A.H. **As such, Zaynab Bint Khuzaymah had married first three cousins of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ one of the other.** She had endured great pains in the cause of Islam. Besides divorce from Tufail, she had been widowed twice due to martyrdom of her husbands Ubaida bin Harith and Abdullah bin Jahsh in the Battles of Badr and Uhud Respectively. Although the historians are silent about ten other children of Zainab yet it is known that she had with her a son named Muhammad from Abdullah b. Jahsh. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, had the moral obligation to provide shelter to the devout lady and ex-wife of his first cousins along with her son Muhammad. He, therefore, married her soon after the completion of her Idda.

Zainab had been extremely generous towards the poor even during the Jahiliyyah. She was known as '**Umm al Masakeen**' ام المساكين i.e. **the mother of the poor**. This extremely generous and pious lady proved to be a loving

⁷¹ Amr Khalid, *The Mothers of the Believers*, s.v. Zaynab bint Khuzayma, (cited by Wikipedia.com).

Amr Mohamed Helmi Khaled (born 5 September 1967) is an Egyptian Muslim activist and television preacher. The New York Times Magazine, in reference to Khaled's popularity in Arab countries, described him in its April 30, 2006 issue as "the world's most famous and influential Muslim television preacher." Amr Khaled has recently been chosen as one of the world's 100 most influential people by Time Magazine.

⁷² *Azawaj e Mutahharat and Sahabat Encyclopedia*, p. 175, 76.

⁷³ This has been reported by many historians including Ibn-e-Shahab Zuhri. Dispute about this marriage needs to be resolved by the historians because there are many writers who do not report about her marriage with Abdullah b. Jahsh.

companion of the Prophet ﷺ only for a short period of 3 to 8 months. She died at the age of about 30 years in the month of Rabi ul Akhar, 4 A.H. Sayyida Zainab had, therefore, been the only wife of the Prophet ﷺ whose funeral prayer was led by the Prophet ﷺ himself. She was buried in Jannat al Baqee at Medina. After Khadijah tul Kubra, therefore, she was the only wife of the Prophet ﷺ who died during his life. No funeral prayer could be offered for Sayyida Khadijah-tul-Kubra simply because the commandments for the same had been received much later than her death.

6. Sayyida Umm Salamah (RA)

Her name was Hind bint Abu Umayya bin al-Mugheera bin Abdullah bin Umar bin Makhzum. As such, she belonged to a powerful and leading tribe of Quraish at Makkah. The mother of Hind was Atiqah bint Aamir bin Rabeea bin Malik bin Khuzaima or Juzaima. Abu Umayyah, the father of Hind was a rich merchant of Makkah who was extremely famous for his generosity and feeding the poor. He was, therefore, known as '**Zad-ur-Raqib**'.

Hind was married to Abdullah bin Abdul-Asad who was a foster-brother of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Being son of Barrah bint Abdul Mutlib, he also was the first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Both the husband and the wife were among the earliest converts to Islam and also the first migrants to Abyssinia where Umm Salama gave birth to her son Salama after whom she was known as Umm Salama and her husband as Abu Salama. Abu Salamah was a devoted Muslim and famous for his fighting acumen, bravery and devotion to Islam. He played a heroic role in the battle of Badr and Uhud. During the later, Abu Salama received serious injuries. Soon after the wounds were healed, he was assigned the task of fighting Banu Asad from which he returned successful but his wounds got septic to cause his death in the mid of 4th A.H.

Abu Salama and his wife Umm Salama had been subjected to severe persecution from their own tribe as well as other

non-believers at Makkah. To escape from the torture, both the husband and wife had migrated to Abyssinia twice before their migration to Madina. Although, they had already suffered a great deal in the cause of Islam yet the troubles of Umm Salama culminated in the death of Abu Salama. She was a beautiful woman of **about 26/27 years left as a widow with four children i.e. Salama, Umar, Darrah and Zainab**. She had no brothers or relatives to look after her at Medina. Keeping in view the sacrifices of the family and the fact that Umm Salama was the widow of the foster brother of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the later had no recourse except to take the widow and the orphans under his own care. He, therefore, married Umm Salama in 4 A.H. She served the Prophet ﷺ wholeheartedly and used to accompany him in some of the battles led by him.

As a wife of the Prophet ﷺ, Umm Salama had acquired great knowledge of the traditions and jurisprudence of Islam. She was the narrator of about 387 Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ and in this respect she was second only to Sayyida Aishah, the most learned and venerable wife of the Prophet ﷺ. Umm Salama (RA) died in 61 or 64 A.H. at the age of 80-84 years. **She, therefore, survived for about 54 years after the Prophet ﷺ. As such, she was the last one among the wives of the Prophet ﷺ to die.** Many among the male and female companions of the Prophet ﷺ and their successors used to consult the mother of the believers to solve different problems of jurisprudence and traditions of the Prophet ﷺ till her death.

7. Sayyida Zainab bint Jahsh

For detailed account of the life and conduct of Sayyida Zainab bint Jahsh, please refer to our chapter titled *Zaid, Zainab and the Holy Prophet ﷺ*.

8. Sayyida Umm Habibah Bint Abi Sufyan

She is Ramlah bint Abu Sufyan Sakhr bin Harb bin Umayyah bin Abd Shams bin Kusai. As such, Kusai is the

common ancestor of Umm Habibah and the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Abu Sufyan, the father of Umm Habibah was the most prominent leader of Quraish up to the 8 A.H. i.e. till the conquest of Makkah by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Umm Habibah was born about 30 years before Hijra and **she was married to Ubaidullah bin Jahash al-Asadi, the brother of Zainab bint Jahsh (the Mother of the Believers)**. Both Ubaidullah and Umm Habiba were among the earliest converts to Islam. Due to severe persecution of the Muslims at the hand of non-believers at Makkah, the husband and wife had to migrate to Abyssinia where Umm Habiba gave birth to a girl named Hibibah from whom she took the agnomen Umm Habibah. Some time after their stay at Abyssinia, Ubaidullah became a Christian. Umm Habibah, therefore, got herself separated from the apostate. Ubaidullah turned to Alcohol and due to excessive drinking, died a short time after his separation from Umm Habiba.

The apostasy and death of Ubaidullah had caused utter desperation and grief to Umm Habibah who had been left helpless in the foreign land. She had two children i.e. Habibah and Abdullah. Umm Habibah had suffered severely because Abu Sufyan her father had severed all relations with her. It was in the cause of Islam that the good lady had sacrificed her nativity at Makkah. The 2nd shock was apostasy of her husband in a foreign land and she was left helpless in Habsha. Meanwhile, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also had migrated to Medina with all his followers. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, felt deeply concerned about destitution and despair of Umm Habibah in Abyssinia. To retrieve her from the desperation and grief, the Prophet ﷺ decided to marry the widow. Besides restoration of dignity and shelter for Umm Habibah, the Prophet also expected an improvement of relations between him and Banu Umayyah, the most powerful tribe of the Quraish. He, therefore, sent a message to King Negus of Abyssinia to propose his marriage with Umm Habibah. The message brought great relief and happiness to her. After her acceptance of the proposal, the King married her to the Prophet ﷺ and managed to send her to Madinah in the company of Sharjeel bin Hasnah and others through a ship in 7 A.H.

Abu Sufyaan the father of Umm Habiba had been the most important leader of the Quraish at Makkah. He had led the Quraish in the Battle of Uhud in 3 A.H. In 5 A.H. (627 AD) he again led the Quraish and many other tribes of Arabia to attack and besiege Madina for about 27 days during the Battle of Trench (Ghazwa e Khandaq). The marriage of Umm Habibah with the Prophet ﷺ in the year 6 or 7 A.H. proved to be a blessings for the Muslims. They became safe from the attacks of the Quraish and other tribes of Arabia thereafter. As such besides compensating Umme Habibah for her unshakable fidelity to Islam, her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ also had the political effect of establishing relationship with the most influential and powerful family of Makkah.

Umm Habibah was a widow of about 37 years at the time of her marriage with the Prophet ﷺ. She was famous for her charitable acts and always continued to worship Allah devotedly. **Living for more than 34 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ**, Umm Habibah died at Medina at the Age of about 73 years in 44 A.H. during the reign of her brother Sayyidina Mu'awiyah son of Abu Sufyaan.

9. Sayyida Juwairiah Bint Al Harith

Her name was Barrah bint al Harith bin Abu Dhirar before her marriage with the Prophet ﷺ. Harith, her father was the chieftain of the tribe of Banu Mustaliq an Arab tribe occupying the territory of Qadid on the Red Sea shore between Jeddah and Rabigh. They were allies of Quraish of Mecca. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had received news that the tribe was gathering together against the Muslims under the leadership of al-Harith ibn Abi Dirar. The Muslim force took them at a watering place called al-Muraysi' and defeated them soundly, taking the Mustaliq chief, al-Harith, his daughter named Barrah and others as captives of War.

Musafeh bin Safwan the husband of Barrah was killed in the battle and she as a captive fell to the lot of Thabit bin Qais bin Al Shammas. To save herself from the humiliation of slavery, she sought an audience with the messenger of Allah ﷺ and besides disclosing her status to him, she offered to pay for her freedom. The prophet said to her, 'shall I tell you a better plan than this? ... I will pay

the price of your freedom and will marry you'. She willingly agreed to marry the Prophet ﷺ who changed her name from Barrah to Juwariah. On learning about the marriage of Juwariah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the believers decided to free all the captives from the tribe of Banu Mustaliq who numbered hundred or more. **This marriage of the Prophet ﷺ was again with a widow but it also served as a political gesture of goodwill for Banyu Mustaliq.** Learning about the marriage of Juwariah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ the entire tribe of Banu Mustaliq came under the fold of Islam. Juwariah was a God-fearing woman who used to spend long hours worshiping Allah during day and night. She also had been the source to narrate certain important traditions from the Prophet ﷺ. **Living for about 46 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, she died in 56 A.H. at the age of 65 or 70 years.**

10. Sayyida Safiyah bint Huiay

According to Zarqani, her original name was Zaynab which was subsequently changed to Safiyyah bint Huyai bin Akhtab bin Saeed bin Aamir bin Ubaid bin Khazrah bin Abi Habib bin Nuzair bin Niham bin Makhtum. **The family descended from Lavi son of Jacob the prophet of the LORD.** Sayyida Safiyyah also was an offspring of Aaron the brother of Moses. Her mother named Darrah was daughter of Shamwal. As such, Safiyah was the sister of Rafa'ah bin Shamwal Qarzi i.e. the chieftain of Banu Quraiza. This shows that both from maternal as well as paternal side, Safiyyah belonged to the most respectable tribes of the Jews.

Safiyyah was just 14 years old when she was married to Salam bin Mushqam al Qarzi who had been a renowned cavalier of Arabia. Some estrangement between the couple caused the divorce of Safiyyah. She was then married to Kinana bin Abul Aqeeq the ruler of al-Qamus fort in Khyber. During Muslim invasion of Khyber in 7 A.H., the husband, the brother and father of Safiyyah were killed while defending the fort. Safiyyah and other women were taken

as captives of War. She fell to the lot of Dihyah bin Khalifa al-Kalbi but some of the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ told him that Safiyyah belonged to the chieftains of Qurayzah as well as Banu Nuzair. They, therefore, suggested that the Holy Prophet ﷺ may marry Safiyyah himself to save her and the Jews from the feeling of disgrace due to her marriage with a man who had no parity with Safiyyah because she descended from the chieftains of the Jews. came from the who belonged to the most respected tribes of the Jews. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, called Dihyah Kalbi along with Safiyah and said to him 'take another woman from among the captives'. The second part of the long narrative from Anas also endorses the same:

(...) He said: we took it (the territory of Khaibar) by force, and there were gathered the prisoners of war. There came Dihya and he said: Messenger of Allah, bestow me a girl of the prisoners, He said: Go and get any girl. He made a choice for safiyya daughter of Huyayy (b. Akhtab). There came a man to Allah's Apostle (SAW) and said: Apostle of Allah, you have bestowed Safiyya bint Huyayy, the chief of Quraiza and Al-Nadir, upon Dihya and she suits you only. He said: Call him along with her, So he came along with her. When Allah's Apostle (SAW) saw her he said: Take any other woman from among the prisoners. He (the narrator) said: He (the Holy Prophet) then granted her emancipation and married her. Thabit said to him: Abu Hamza how much dower did he (the Holy Prophet) give to her? He said: He granted her freedom and then married her. On the way, Umm Sulaim embellished her and then sent her to him (the Holy Prophet) at night. Allah's Apostle (SAW) appeared as a bridegroom in the morning. He (the Holy Prophet) said: He who has anything (to eat) should bring that. Then the cloth was spread. A man came with cheese, another came with dates, and still another came with refined butter, and they prepared hais, and that was the wedding feast of Allah's Messenger (SAW).⁷⁴

As for Dihyah, he chose the sister of Kinanah bin Abu'al Aqeeq the ex-husband of Safiyah. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had given Safiyah the choice either to embrace Islam and

⁷⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, Vol. II, (Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, Urdu Bazar, 1998), p. 360.

to become his wife or to join her relatives at Khyber. Ibn Saad⁷⁵ narrates that:

When Safiya came to the Holy Prophet (pbuh), he said to her; 'Among the Jews your father did not stop in his enmity towards me until Allah destroyed him.' She said: 'O Allah's Messenger! Indeed Allah says in His book, 'No one will take anyone else's burden'. So the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said to her: 'Make your choice, if you will chose Islam I'll select you for myself and if you chose Judaism, I'll set you free and send you to your people.' She said; 'O Allah's Messenger indeed I longed for Islam and testified for you even before you gave me this invitation when I came to you. I have no guardian among the Jews, neither father nor brother and I prefer Islam over disbelief. Allah and His Messenger are dear to me than freedom and to return to my people.'⁷⁶

On hearing this, the Prophet ﷺ set her free and that was her dowry. She also told the Prophet ﷺ that she had been coveting for Islam long before you invited me to embrace it. She also told him of a vision in which she saw that the moon had fallen into her lap. When she narrated the vision to Kinana, her husband, he slapped her face severely saying that she was aspiring to marry the king of Arabia i.e. Muhammad the Messenger of Allah. The blow had its mark on the face of Safiyah till the Prophet ﷺ saw her and inquired about the same. Ibn Umar has narrated that:

In the eye of Sayyidah Safiya was a scar. Holy Prophet (pbuh) said to her, 'What is this scar in your eye?' She said, 'I mentioned before my husband that I saw a moon falling into my lap in a dream so he slapped me and said; 'Do you long

⁷⁵ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Sa'd ibn Manī **al-Baṣrī** al-Hāshimī (168-230 AH) was a scholar and Arabian biographer. He was from Basra, but lived mostly in Baghdad. He is also known as كاتب الواقدي (scribe of Muhammad bin Umar al-Waqidi) who had not been counted among the true reporters of facts. Ibn Sa'd had been a proponent of the Mu'tazila doctrine of the created Qur'an and supported the king Al-Ma'mun's stance on the matter. In spite of this, after thorough criticism of his writings, the Ulema hold Ibn Saad as credible.

⁷⁶ Ibn Saad Vol. 8, p. 123.

for the King of Yathrib [i.e. Holy Prophet pbuh]' She said: 'There was none more hateful to me than Allah's Messenger (pbuh) as he killed my father and husband. [But] the Prophet (pbuh) explained, 'O Safiya your father instigated the Arabs against me and did so and so...' He kept on explaining until that feeling (of hatred) vanished from me.⁷⁷

Sayyida Safiyah also had overheard a dialogue between her father and uncle about the advent of the promised Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم in which her father said to her uncle that **no doubt Muhammad is the true Prophet of God yet we are determined to deny and to oppose him**. The vision and the dialogue might have, therefore, inspired Safiyyah to embrace Islam and to joyfully accept the offer of the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم to marry him. Although she was a divorcee of Salaam bin Mushqam al Qardi and subsequently, the widow of Kinana bin Abu alAqeeq killed in the Battle of Khyber yet she was 17 years old at the time of her marriage with the Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. After conquering different castles of the Jews at Khyber the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم had started returning to Medina. When they reached Sahba, 6 miles away from Khayber Safiyyah became clean from her first menses after the death of her former husband. The Holy Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم, therefore, consummated the marriage with Safiyah at Sahba in 6 AH. Imam Bukhari narrates that:

The Prophet (pbuh) selected her for himself, and set out with her, and when we reached a place called Sadd-as-Sahba', Safiya became clean from her menses then Allah's Messenger married her.⁷⁸

The marriage had a great political as well as missionary impact on the Jews. Many of them from different areas in Arabia joined the ranks of the Muslims. As for the rest of the Jews, they never could reassemble to confront the Muslims themselves or to join others to attack them. At Madina, Safiyyah was placed in the house of Haritha bin Al Numaan. It has been narrated that Aysha and Hafsa, the wives of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم went to see her. During the conversation, they proudly talked of the close relations of

⁷⁷ *Tabarani Kabeer*, Hadith 19668. Albani classified it as Sahih in his *Silsala Sahiha* H. 2793.

⁷⁸ Bukhari, Hadith 3889.

their fathers with the Prophet ﷺ and also on account of being the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. On report of the matter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ consoled Safiyyah by saying:

Did you not say to them: how can you be better than I, when my father is Aaron, my uncle is Moses and my husband is Muhammad.⁷⁹

It has also been reported that Safiyyah had got hurt on learning that Hafsa bint Umar had referred to her as a Jewish girl. Finding her weeping over the slight, the Prophet ﷺ said to her:

Verily, you are the daughter of a Prophet, your uncle is a Prophet and you are married to a Prophet, so on what basis do they consider themselves superior to you?⁸⁰

Sayyidah Safiyyah was a short statured woman of exceeding beauty. She had been very sincere and truthful Muslim who was famous for her righteousness and devotion to the Almighty. **She survived for about 42 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ** and died at Medina in the year 50 or 52 A.H. when she was about 70 years old. After her death, she was buried at 'Jannat al Baqee' cemetery at Medina.

Criticism on the Consummation of Marriage:

Some of the critics of the Holy Prophet ﷺ blame him for consummating the marriage with Safiyah soon after the death of her former husband and without waiting for the expiry of her Iddah. In this respect, we may point out that all the Prophets of the LORD had been following the Law introduced by the true messengers of Allah preceding them. No one effected any change in the same without receipt of a fresh commandment from the LORD to do so. Moses had been the only Law giver before the Holy Prophet ﷺ and all the Prophets of Israel including Jesus himself were

⁷⁹ At-Tirmidhi, No. 3893

⁸⁰ Abdul Ahad, *The Honourable Wives of the Prophet* (Darussalam, Riyadh), p. 117.

bound to follow him.⁸¹ Following was the injunction of Torah about the Iddah of the women prisoners of war:

When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife; Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails; And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, **and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her**, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.⁸²

As against the Law of Moses enjoining most harsh and humiliating treatment of the defeated people, the Qur'an enjoined the Muslims to treat their enemies and the captives nicely. **The Muslims, therefore, stopped the humiliating practice of shaving heads of the women captives of war or to keep them in mourning dress up to a month after the deaths of their kith and kin.** The Muslims in this respect had to act upon the divine guidance as under.

Therefore, when ye meet the Unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks; At length, when ye have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them): **thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom: Until the war lays down its burdens.** Thus (are ye commanded): but if it had been Allah's Will, He could certainly have exacted retribution from them (Himself); but (He lets you fight) in order to test you, some with others. But those who are slain in the Way of Allah,- He will never let their deeds be lost.⁸³

As such, only the captives remaining after the exchange and remission as an act of kindness are at the disposal of the emir or leader of the army. Since, there had been no jails then, the emir could distribute the captives (male or female) among some fighters in the way of Allah. No man or woman could be arrested or made captive unless and until he had been found in the battle field helping the

⁸¹ Deu. 4:2, Luke 16:17 & Mathew 5:18.

⁸² Deu 21:10-13 KJV.

⁸³ Al-Qur'an 47:4 Yousuf Ali..

fighters against the Muslims. No Muslim could rape or molest any woman at all. Anyhow, the women allotted to some particular persons served almost like slaves to them but in accordance with the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ they had to be treated nicely. Their custodians/masters were obliged to provide them with food and clothing just like their own. No humiliation or degradation of the captives of war has been allowed in Islam.

The law of Idda, however, had been different for women captives of war from the time of Moses as quoted earlier. In Islam Idda for a widow or married woman captive of war had merely been cleanliness from her first menses after the death or separation from her husband. The Idda for the pregnant woman had been the birth of their child (Al-Qur'an 65:4). Even in this case, Muslims are not allowed to have intercourse with them till their cleanliness which usually involves another forty days from the birth of the child.

Actually, Islam had been very sensitive to preserve the lineage of different people. As such, clearance from first menses after the death or separation of husbands of the captive women or their cleanliness after the delivery of the child leaves no doubt about the lineage of the child. The Prophet's tradition in this respect did not differ from the law of Moses. His marriage with Safiyyah was, therefore, consummated in accordance with the law. Abu Sa'id Khudri narrated a saying of the Prophet ﷺ regarding the captives of Awtas⁸⁴:

There must be no intercourse with a pregnant woman till she gives birth, or with one who is not pregnant till she has had one menstrual period.⁸⁵

As regards the injunction of the Qur'an i.e. "If any of you die and leave widows behind, they shall wait concerning

⁸⁴ The Battle of Awtas was a battle fought by the Muslim forces, fought in the year 630 at Awtas located between Mecca and Taif. It was fought after the Battle of Hunayn, but prior to the Siege of Ta'if.

⁸⁵ *Sahih Abu Dawud*, Hadith 2157. Albani classified it as Sahih

themselves four months and ten days (...)”⁸⁶ the same pertains only to the widows of the Muslims and not to the widows among the captives of war. J. Schacht has, therefore, erred to observe that:

The Qur’anic Provisions on which it was based were not always respected during the early years of Islam.⁸⁷

We find no evidence from the history of the Muslims to substantiate the remarks of J. Schacht quoted above. Muslims, in fact, had always been observing the injunctions of the Qur’an meticulously. It is also worth noting here that the verse 2:234 of Surah Al-Baqarah might have been revealed a year or so before the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Hence, the remarks that the Muslims did not always respect the Quranic Provisions during early years of Islam represent only a biased opinion of an antagonist of Islam. Regarding revelation of al-Baqarah, Maulana Moududi writes that:

The greater part of this Surah was revealed in the early Madinian period, soon after the migration of the Prophet to Medina. A small portion was revealed later, and is included here because its subject is in harmony with the earlier parts. Hence we find the verse prohibiting interest (verses 275 ff.) included in this Sura even though they were revealed during the very last days of the Prophet’s life. Moreover, the concluding verses were revealed in Makka but have been incorporated here because they fit into the overall framework.⁸⁸

Since the verse 2:234 might have been revealed towards the ending years of the life of the Prophet ﷺ, therefore, it could be due to the ignorance of the facts that J. Schacht was misled to say that the Muslims did not always respect the Qur’anic provisions on Iddah during the early years of Islam.

⁸⁶ Al-Qur’an 2:234 Yusuf Ali.

⁸⁷ Brill’s Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. 4, p. 1010, ‘Iddah’

⁸⁸ Maulana Maududi, *Tafheem ul Qur’an* tr. Of Zafar Ishaq Ansari, Vol. 1, p. 39.

11. Sayyida Maimoonah bint Al Harith

She was Maimoonah bint Harith bin Hazan bin Bujairain bin Hazam bin Ruba bin Abdullah bin Hilal bin Amar bin Sasa bin Muawiah bin Kair bin Hwazan bin Mansoor bin Ikrama Khaseefatah bin Qais bin Ilan bin Madar. The eldest sister of Maimoonah was Lubabah Al Kubra bin Al Harith who was the wife of Al Abbas bin Abdul Mutlib, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ. According to some sources, Lubaba had been **the first among women to embrace Islam after Khadijah tul Kubrah**. Zaynab bint Khuzaima the wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who died in 3 A.H. was another sister of Maimoonah from her mother. Maimoonah, therefore, had an inclination towards Islam since her childhood.

Some of the historians report that Maimoonah herself desired to marry the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Consequently, it was through Al Abbas, the uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that marriage of Maimoonah was arranged with him in Shawwal 7 A.H. at the time of Umra tul Qaza at Makkah. As such, after Marriage with Aysha in Shawwal 1 AH, the Holy Prophet ﷺ again repeated the tradition of marriage in Shawwal with Maimoonah to reconfirm the reform indicating that Islam had removed the constraint of the Jahiliyyah on marriage in Shawwal. **Secondly in some communities it was considered unlawful to marry the sister of one's deceased wife.** Maimoonah was the real sister of the Holy Prophet's wife Zainab bint Khuzaimah who died in 3 A.H. By his marriage with Maimoonah, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ abrogated the tradition of Jahiliyyah preventing marriage with the sister of one's deceased wife. Earlier to that, in 3 AH the marriage of Sayyida Umm-e-Kulthum with Uthman b. Affan after the death of her Sister Ruqayyah was another example of the abrogation of the tradition of Jahiliyyah. After his marriage with the 2nd daughter of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Uthman used to be addressed as "Dhun-Noorayn" (ذوالنورين). These marriages also reformed the prohibition introduced by the Roman Synod in 402 AD that a Christian could not marry a

deceased wife's sister.⁸⁹ We find in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics that:

About the same time (402) a Roman Synod took the same action when it forbade a Christian to marry a deceased wife's sister, and in the **same canon forbade him to have a concubine if he had a wife living**. This action was regulative for the Middle Ages and the canon of the Toletan Synod was often referred to. The judgment of Leo the Great (458) was not out of keeping with it, though it strongly favours the hard Roman law.⁹⁰

This Roman prohibition to marry a deceased wife's sister had no foundation in the Old or the New Testament. The Holy Prophet's marriage with Maimuna was, therefore, the reformation of the Roman (Christian) law quoted above. Maimunah had been sister (from the mother's side) of Zaynab bint Khuzaimah a former wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who had died in 4 A.H. This marriage too was with a woman who was a divorcee as well as a widow. Maimoonah had firstly been married to Masud bin Amr bin Umair al-Thaqafi who divorced her sometime after the marriage. She was then married to Abu Ruhum bin Abdul Uzza, a non-Muslim who died when Maimoonah was a young woman of 26 years.

Unique Nobility of Hind Bint Awf:

Besides other considerations, the marriage with Maimoonah also had **strong political motives behind it. It is said that mother of Maimoonah i.e. Hind bint Auf had eight daughters**. One of her daughters i.e. Zaynab bint Khuzaimah the wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had died in 3 or 4 AH. Maimoonah was, therefore, another daughter of Hind married by the messenger of Allah. As such, **Hind bint Auf had been the only mother in the world to have the opportunity and nobility to become the mother in law of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at two different times**. Another daughter of Hind was married to Abu Bakr Siddiq and after his death to Ali bin Abi Talib. Ja'afar bin Abi Talib too was married to a daughter of Hind. Her daughter Lubaba al Kubra was the wife of Al-Abbas the uncle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The other one i.e. Lubaba

⁸⁹ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 817.

⁹⁰ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 817.

tu-Sughra was the wife of Waleed bin Mugeera i.e. the father of Khalid bin Waleed the celebrated general of Quraish and the Muslims. As such, Maimoonah was the real maternal aunt of Khalid bin Waleed who had not accepted Islam till then. Hamza son of Abdul Mutlib too was married to a daughter of Hind. Gharrah another daughter of Hind was married to Abdullah bin Malik al Hilali. The last one was Shaddad bin Alhad to marry a daughter of Hind. In the circumstances stated above the marriage of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with Maimoonah had been extremely helpful to strengthen his relationships with influential as well as powerful personalities among Quraish at Makkah as well as at Medina. Maimoonah's marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ took place almost a year before the conquest of Makkah. It was, perhaps, due to her influence that Khalid bin Waleed and Ikrama bin Abu Jahl and some other persons had converted to Islam before the conquest of Makkah. Similarly it was due to Maimoonah's family influence that there developed a sympathetic attitude towards Islam in various families of Makkah.

Maimoonah was known for her piety, purity and abstemiousness. She devoted all her time and life to the service of Allah and the Prophet ﷺ. She was the last wife married by the Prophet ﷺ. She had a special fondness to manumit the slaves. Although, she had spent only three years in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ yet she was narrator of 76 Ahadith (sayings of the Prophet ﷺ). Maimoona lived for a long time after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, many male as well as female companions of the Prophet and others used to call on her to learn Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet ﷺ. Although the historians differ about the year of her death yet all of them agree that she died during the caliphate of Yzid son of Muawiah bin Abi Sufyan. She was buried at Sarif near Makkah the place where she had been married to the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

12. Mariya the Copt

It was in 6 A.H. that the Prophet ﷺ sent letters to great rulers in the Middle East. These also included a letter sent to al-Muqawqis, the patriarch and Roman governor of Egypt at Alexandria. Al-Muqawqis treated Hatib bin Abi Balta'a, the bearer of the letter with great respect. Through his letter to the Prophet ﷺ, he declined the offer politely and returned the messenger of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with some valuable presents including two girls who enjoyed great respect in the royal family of Egypt. Martin Lings records that:

The Prophet's letter to the Muqawqis, summoning him to Islam, was answered evasively; but with his answer the ruler of Egypt sent a rich present of a thousand measures of gold, twenty robes of fine cloth, a mule, a she-ass and, as the crown of the gift, two Coptic Christian slave girls escorted by an elderly eunuch. The girls were sisters, Mariyah and Sirin, and both were beautiful, but Mariyah was exceptionally so, and the Prophet marveled at her beauty. He gave Sirin to Hassaan ibn Thabit, and lodged Mariyah in the nearby house where Safiyyah had lived before her apartment adjoining the Mosque was built.⁹¹

Mariyah bint Shamun had been a bondswoman gifted by Muqawqis to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She was a high statured and beautiful woman of white and red color. She had accepted Islam due to preachings of Hatib bin Abi Balta'a during their journey from Egypt to Medina. The Holy Prophet ﷺ reserved Mariyah for himself and gave Sereen to Hassan b. Thabit. This act of the Prophet ﷺ, therefore, reformed the prohibition of the Roman Synod 402 AD (as quoted earlier) according to which one could not have a concubine if he had a wife living.

The first house in which Umm al-Muminin Mariya resided was the house of Haritha b. Nu'man. In Dhil-Hajj, 8 A.H., she had born a son named Abraham to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. On the birth of Abraham, the Prophet ﷺ said that this son has won freedom for Mariyah.

⁹¹ Martin Lings, *Muhammad his life Based on Earliest Sources*, (New York, Inner Traditions International, Ltd, 1983), p. 277.

Ibrahim the son of the Prophet ﷺ died at the age of about 18 months. Incidentally, the eclipse of sun happened on the same day. There had been a great superstition of the old days that eclipse of sun or moon signified the death of some great nobility. People, therefore, started saying that the eclipse had occurred due to the death of the son of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Learning about the same the Holy Prophet ﷺ assembled the people to dispel the misconception. He said that the eclipses of Sun or Moon are among the signs of the LORD and they have nothing to do with the death of any human being on earth. When you see these signs, you must offer your prayers to the LORD and prostrate before Him.

Historians like Ibn-e-Saad had depended almost entirely on the reports of Muhammad b. Umar al-Waqidi to make us believe that the Holy Prophet ﷺ visited the house of Sayyida Hafsa on the day fixed for her. Reportedly, Hafsa had gone to chat with her father seeking leave from the Prophet ﷺ and leaving him alone at her house. At that time Hazrat Mariyah came to him and stayed with him in seclusion. On her return Sayyida Hafsa found Mariyah there and she strongly protested against the same. It was to appease her that the Holy Prophet ﷺ swore not to have any conjugal relations with Sayyida Mariyah thereafter.

The afore-stated story deserves to be rejected outrightly due to various reasons including the following:

The reporter does not specify the month and year of the incidence. The readers, therefore, need to guess whether the incidence pertained to the time when Sayyida Mariyah was lodged at the house of Haritha b. Numan which was quite close to the houses of Sayyida Aishah and Hafsa or she had been shifted to Mashrab-e-Ibrahim in Aliah i.e. outskirts of Medina. Indeterminate time period, therefore, creates doubt about the possibility of Sayyida Mariyah's visit to the house of Sayyida Hafsa.

It is unbelievable that Sayyida Hafsa could have preferred to go to her father just for a chat leaving the Prophet ﷺ alone at her house on the day which by rotation belonged to her.

Ibn-e-Saad relied mostly on Muhammad b. Umar Ibn-e-Waqid al-Aslami who had heard it from Muhammad b.

Yahya b. Hibban Ansari who does not mention the name of the companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or some other intermediary to complete the chain of narrators. This had perhaps been the reason that none of the six authentic compilers of Ahadith (صحااح سنه) included such reports in their collections. We, therefore, attribute this story to the Munafiqoon and also perhaps some Shia fabricators bent upon degrading Ummahat-al-Mumineen like Sayyida Hafsa, Aishah and Mariyah. Some of them insist that Sayyida Fatima alone had been the daughter from the loins of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who did not father Sayyida Zainab, Ruqayya, Umm-e-Kalthum or Sayyidina Ibrahim. Their grudge against all of them is, therefore, evident from their writings.

Since Mariyah had been a bondswoman gifted to the Prophet ﷺ by al-Muqawqis of Egypt, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ after choosing her for himself was under no obligation to conceal his relation with her. He, therefore, had no compulsion to swear on oath that he will have no conjugal relations with Mariyah thereafter.

The alleged episode had not been a secret that the Prophet ﷺ might have confided with his wives as alleged by the Munafiqoon. The verse 3 of Al-Tahreem containing the words *و اذ اسر النبي الى بعض ازواجه حديثا* (*the Prophet ﷺ had confided a matter to a wife in secret*), therefore, cannot be applied to Sayyida Mariya because Sayyida Hafsa had allegedly witnessed the incidence herself. This, therefore, rules out any possibility of the Holy Prophet's confiding a matter to her in secret.

The Munafiqoon and the enemies of Islam also had tried to apply the incidence of Ifk and other allegations to Sayyida Mariyah. They, however, never had any credible evidence to support their accusation against her. She had in fact been an extremely pious lady who after the death of the Prophet ﷺ had secluded herself from all the worldly affairs to devote entirely to the worship of the Almighty. She died in Muharram 16 A.H. i.e. about 5 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. Caliph Umar led her funeral prayers (نماز جنازه). The elderly Egyptian eunuch Maboore sent with her by Muqawqis also had accepted Islam and counted among companions (صحابى) of the Prophet ﷺ. He continued to serve Mariyah during the life of the Holy Prophet and also thereafter, till her death.

This marriage also aimed at the reform to treat even the bonds women like regular wives.

13. Sayyida Rayhana bint Sham'un

Rayhana bint Sham'un bin Zaid bin Khanafa originally belonged to Banu Nudair tribe of the Jews at Medina but she had married a man from the Banu Quraiza who were besieged by the Muslims due to their treason during the Battle of Trench in 5 A.H. On their surrender, the leaders of the tribe chose Saad b. Muaaz to decide their fate. Saad bin Muaaz, however, decided the case exactly as per the Law in Torah. It entailed that all the men of Banu Quraiza be executed for treason while women may be enslaved. Rayhana had been among the women who were enslaved. According to Ibn-e-Ishaq, the Prophet ﷺ had offered her the status of becoming his wife provided she accepted Islam but initially she refused the offer. Subsequently, she accepted Islam willingly and became a wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

According to Ibn Saad, the Prophet ﷺ had manumitted Rayhana and she had married him. Other historians, however, differ on this point. Allama Shibli Numani has observed that all reports about the Holy Prophet's marriage with Raihana originate from Waqidi or Ibn-e-Ishaq. **It was only Waqidi who specifically mentioned about the Prophet's Nikah with Rayhana.** Ibn-e-Saad, therefore, reproduces the tradition from Waqidi to affirm that the Prophet had married her and she lived in his house. Hafiz ibn Minda (*Tabaqat-us-Sahaba*), however, writes that Muhammad ﷺ set Rayhana free and she went back to live with her own people.⁹² In view of this, nothing can be said with any certainty about her. It is however, worth noting here that most of the historians agree on freedom of Rayhana soon after her arrest. She, therefore, must have been a free woman at the time the Prophet ﷺ might have married her. Historians also agree that Sham'un, the father

⁹² Allama Shibli Numani, *Seerat-ul-Nabi*, Vol. I, (Karachi: Muhamamd Saeed & Sons, Qur'an Mehel, Moulvi Musafir Khana, 1973), p. 440.

of Rayhana had converted to Islam and he is counted among the worthy companions of the Prophet ﷺ. We, therefore, conclude the discussion with the remarks of Muhammad Husayn Haykal that *"Not much is known for certain about Rayhana except that she died about 10 months before the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ"*.⁹³

⁹³ Muhammad Husayn Haykal, *Life of Muhammad*, p. 285-298 & 429-442.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE MARRIAGES

Marriages of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

We have already devoted the two ending chapters of the first volume of this book to explain that polygamy had been the privilege of the few who could afford it or those for whom it became an utter necessity due to various circumstances faced by them. The interested readers may, therefore, update their information by having a fresh study of the same. It is, however, strange to observe that even the great historians and the religious scholars in the West do not pay any attention to the contents of the Bible or the preachings and conduct of the prophets of the Lord. Pretending extreme ignorance about the same the orientalist and the priests in the West try to present monogamy as the only natural and permissible form of matrimony. They forget that human beings cannot change the nature of their creation nor can they eliminate their inclinations appetites and the desires.

Most of the western writers did not keep in mind that the Almighty had created humankind with such attributes and qualities that were necessary for their test and trial on Earth. Humankind must not, therefore, wage a war against the nature of their creation nor try to transform their physical needs into the metaphysical peculiarities of the spirits like Angels. God, however, did not demand anything from the human beings that could be incompatible with the nature of their creation or things around them. As regards polygamy, it was due to the varying circumstances of the individuals in the world that the Almighty had allowed it as a privilege of those few who were in the dire need of marrying more than one woman for getting children, to avoid corruption, to provide protection to the helpless women and the orphans and numerous other reasons. Such people also do not apply their minds due to the circumstances impelling human beings to marry more than one woman.

Before further discussion on the matter, we have to remind the critics that the Holy Prophet ﷺ always claimed to be a normal human being just like others living around him. The Lord had himself bade him to proclaim that:

Say: "I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me, that your Allah is one Allah: whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner."⁹⁴

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, had all the human attributes in him. He was neither sexless nor free from the needs to gratify his hunger, thirst or need for rest and recreation etc. The prime difference had been that he was receiving direct guidance from the Lord who always continued to watch the conduct of each and every prophet sent by him. None of the Prophets chosen by the Lord could, therefore, transgress the law of the Lord. Muhammad ﷺ had undoubtedly been the greatest and the best of the Prophets of the Lord. He, therefore, left behind the legacy of the best moral pattern to be imitated by all the human beings after him. God said:

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah. (Al-Qur'an 33:21)

In view of the above it will be useful for the critics to compare the work and conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a man with the prophets (as men) preceding him and also to consult the law of Moses and traditions of the Prophets before labeling any slanders to the promised prophet of the Lord. None of those chosen people of the Lord ever preferred to gratify his human instincts or to gain wealth and power diverging from his assignment enjoined by the Lord.

We know that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been living in utter chastity up to 25 years of age. He enjoyed good fame for his piety, integrity and truthfulness even during his earlier life. He was, therefore, acknowledged as (صادق و أمين) i.e. the

⁹⁴ Al-Qur'an 18:110 Yusuf Ali.

trustee and the truthful one, even before receiving his call from the Lord. His first wife was 40 years old Sayyida Khadijah bint Khuwailid who had already suffered from widowhood twice. The marriage had occurred perfectly in the natural circumstances and the pair lived for another 25 years as exemplary wife and husband. She had born the prophet two sons and four daughters. Both the sons had died during the life of Sayyida Khadijah and she died leaving behind the prophet with his four daughters. It was during this time that Sayyida Khawla proposed the Prophet ﷺ to marry again. The proposal consisted of two alternates. The first one was Sayyida Sawda bint Zamaa a 55 years old widow of al-Sakran a great devotee of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She also had four orphan children with her. The other alternate in the proposal was a virgin i.e. Sayyida Aishah bint Abu Bakr the most faithful companion and devotee of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Besides being a beautiful young woman, she also enjoyed great repute for her intellectual capabilities including sharp memory and aptness to understand and resolve complexities of jurisprudence.

It was perhaps to provide shelter and sustenance to Sayyida Sawda that the holy Prophet ﷺ to marry her immediately. The Prophet ﷺ however, had no male children to inherit him. Since Sayyida Sawda had already passed the child-bearing age, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also decided to marry Sayyida Aishah the virgin. Other considerations behind the said marriage and particular circumstances necessitating marriages of the Prophet ﷺ have been detailed in the life account of each of his wives. There might have been one or two more compelling reasons in each case but some of the marriages had been prompted by many other motives. No exhaustive list of the same can be prepared by us. Anyhow, we can list some of the same in the light of the historical reports available today. The same can be divided into the categories given below:

Routine Marriages

Marriages to accommodate widows and orphans of the Martyres

Marriages with the Widows of Close Relatives

Marriages Prompted by political reasons

Marriages to reform laws of Jahiliyyah

Marriages to reform laws of inheritance

Marriages to restore social status of slave women and concubines

Marriages to transmit Islamic teachings

Marriages to demonstrate kind and equitable treatment with different wives

Out of the categories enumerated above, we shall be throwing further light only on marriages prompted by political reasons and the marriages to transmit Islamic teachings.

Marriages Prompted by Political Reasons

Due to the Prophet's marriage with Juwayriyyah, the Muslims had to free more than hundred captives of War from Banu-Mustaliq. The Banu Mustaliq was a sub-tribe of the Banu Khuza'a, occupying the territory of Qadid on the Red Seashore between Jeddah and Rabigh. **It was due to her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ that the entire tribe of Banu-Mustaliq accepted Islam. Muslims, therefore, became secure from future attacks of the tribes on the seaside in their South.** As regards Umm-e-Habibah, she was the daughter of Abu Sufyan, the chief of Makkah who had led the Makkan armies during the battle of Uhud and subsequently, he was the chief of the enemies during the Battle of Trench in which he had assembled many tribes of Arabia forming a total Army of about 27000 persons. The Prophet's marriage with Umm-e-Habibah in 6/7 AH improved his relations with Abu Sufyan and Banu Umayya, the clan of Umm-e-Habibah. His marriage with Safiyyah brought an end to the attacks from the Jews. After the said marriage the Jews also did not instigate others to attack Medina. The last marriage was with Maimoonah in 7 AH during the Umra-tul-Qadha. We have gone into detail to describe her interrelationship with many of the strongest and influential families of Makkah. Consequently, she paved the way for the Makkan people to have a soft corner for the Muslims and to think seriously to accept Islam. It was perhaps for such reasons that the Holy Prophet ﷺ succeeded to

conquer Makkah in 8 AH without any effective resistance from the non-believers.

King David had at least 9 wives and an indefinite number of concubines. The Christians eulogize him as son of God. He had been the most celebrated and ideal king of the Israelites believed to be a prototype of **'the Messiah' also declared as 'the man after God's heart' 'which will fulfill all my will'**.⁹⁵ About him, it had been recorded:

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.⁹⁶

Since David had many wives and concubines plurality of wives can be taken as fulfillment of the will of God. Although the Christians and the Jews do not appreciate large number of the marriages of King Solomon yet it has been reported that:

As inclination gained the ascendancy over reason, self-confidence increased, and he sought to carry out the Lord's purpose in his own way. He reasoned that political and commercial alliances with the surrounding nations would bring these nations to a knowledge of the true God; and he entered into unholy alliance with nation after nation. Often these alliances were sealed by marriages with heathen princesses. The commands of Jehovah were set aside for the customs of surrounding peoples.

Solomon flattered himself that his wisdom and the power of his example would lead his wives from idolatry to the worship of the true God, and also that the alliances thus formed would draw the nations round about into close touch with Israel.⁹⁷

Although the multi-marriages of the Prophet ﷺ have been exactly in accordance with the traditions of the Prophets and the kigns of Israel yet both the Jews and the Christians single out the Holy Prophet ﷺ for sensuousness and increasing sex with age. While doing so, they close their eyes to 9 wives and numerous concubines of King David.

⁹⁵ 1Sa 13:14 & Acts 13:22 (KJV).

⁹⁶ Psa 2:7 KJV.

⁹⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Story of Prophets and Kings*, (Oshawa: The Allen G. White Publications, U.S.A., 1943) p. 54.

They also find no sensuality in King Solomon having 700 wives and 300 concubines. Similarly, they do not accuse Gideon for sensuousness inspite of the fact that he had 70 sons from an unspecified number of wives (Jud. 8:29-31). 40 sons with plurality of wives has nothing objectionable in it (Jud. 12:13-14). Kristna the Indian diety and religious figure had married eight princely wives and about 16100 other wives with the pretension to provide sustenance and protection to the captives of Narakasura defeated and killed by him. Kings of Dahomy used to have thousands of wives till two centuries ago. Similarly, the kings of the Mayas used to have thousands of concubines while the Nobles had up to 800.⁹⁸ As against them, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not have more than 9 wives at any time during his life and those too had been married for the purpose of certain reforms in the marital laws and utter political or other necessities as described in each case.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never had a love affair or sex out of wedlock. With the exception of Aysha all women married by him were either widows or divorcees. It is, therefore, evident from the above that instead of beauty or sex appeal for virgins the Holy Prophet ﷺ had other superior motives to accomodate the helpless widows or divorcees along with their children if any. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had also been particular not to marry any woman unless and until she had accepted Islam. He, therefore, did not marry any unbelieving woman as has been alleged against Solomon in the Bible. All the wives of the Prophet ﷺ had keen interest in learning and proliferating Islam. Some of them continued to guide the believers for about 54 years after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

No religion in the world had ever raised any objection against polygamy up to the advent of Islam. Initially, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been free to marry any number of women at his own will. Even when there was a revelation that no believer may marry more than four women at a time, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was given an exception for about a period of 4 years. As explained earlier, the said exception had special reasons behind it.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not utilize the permission to marry the beautiful young virgins for the purpose of

⁹⁸ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 813. 'Concubinage'.

enjoyment. By repeatedly marrying the widows and the divorcees, the Prophet ﷺ not only provided shelter to them and the children but also dispelled various misconceptions of the Jews, the Christians, the Hindus and many other communities about degradation, defilement and ill-fatedness of the divorcees or the widows.

After her Nikaah, Aysha remained with her parents for another three years before joining the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As such, **up to attaining 54 years of age, Sawdah had been the only wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.** He became bigamous only when Aysha had joined him during the same year. Meanwhile Hafsa bint Umar had become a widow with the martyrdom of her husband Khunais ibn Hazafa due to the injuries sustained by him during the battle of Badar in 2 AH. To console Umar bin Khattab and to accommodate Hafsa, the Prophet ﷺ married her after her Iddah. Subsequently, Abdullah bin Jahsh the celebrated fighter for Islam had been martyred during the battle of Uhud in 3 AH leaving behind his widow Zaynab bint Khuzaimah with his son Muhammad bin Abdullah. Zaynab had become mother of 11 children by then but only her youngest son Muhammad son of Abdullah b. Jahsh was with her. Keeping in view the sacrifices of Abdullah family for Islam and adversity of Zaynab bint Khuzaimah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ married the widow who had been the ex-wife of three first cousins of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Abdullah had rendered great services for Islam. Believers could, therefore, know that in case of martyrdom, their wives and children will not be left to face destitution and helplessness. As regards Zainab bint Jahsh, we may record that Zaid had strained relations with Zaynab because she could not reconcile her Nobility with the servile past of Zaid. Being unable to tolerate her harsh and humiliating attitude with him, Zaid dissolved his marriage with Zainab which had been arranged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. It was, therefore, to reward Zainab appropriately and also to implement various other reforms that the Almighty revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry Zainab himself. This marriage had abrogated many of the traditions of Jahiliyyah as described under the life account of Zaynab.

Details of the event have been provided in our Chapter on 'Zaid, Zainab and the Prophet ﷺ'.

The critics of Islam, however, do not keep in mind the past 55 years of the saintly life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor the enormous responsibilities of spreading Islam at a fast speed in the face of financial stringencies and dangers from enemies all around him at Medina. The age of 55-59 years of the Prophet ﷺ had been the toughest and the busiest period of his life. **Perhaps no one else in the world had ever been more oppressed than him due to multiple responsibilities of defense, preaching, struggling to expand Islam to far off places and to create universal brotherhood of mankind forming a classless society in the world.** The same had been the period when the Holy Prophet ﷺ married five or six wives for political reasons, for providing shelter to the helpless widows or divorcees and with an aim to expand teachings of Islam and to bequeath an academy of Islamic learning at Medina. Unluckily, instead of appreciating the marvelous performance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with the minimum resources at his disposal during the last ten years of his life, the critics were interested only to magnify sensuousness, greed and increasing sex of the Prophet ﷺ with age. Their prejudice had blindfolded them to see anything good in Islam or its Prophet ﷺ. They, therefore, lost their faculties to utilize plain glasses for an impartial study of Islam. They willfully closed their eyes to multipharious responsibilities of the Prophet ﷺ taxing his time to such an extent that he did not have sufficient time even to have sex with one of his wives within a day. Even otherwise it is mere absurdity to carve out a playboy from the aged and the busiest man on Earth fasting with his family for most of the time due to nonavailability of anything to eat. One can hardly conceive of any enjoyment in a poverty ridden society where the royal cottages of the Prophet ﷺ used to remain in utter darkness for months together.

It must be kept in mind here that overwork, fasting and devotion of most of his time to prayers had already heavily taxed the physical and sexual energy of the Prophet ﷺ. The man who had led an extremely pious life as a youth cannot be expected to have a sudden eruption of sensuousness between the age 56 and 59 years. The critics

deliberately ignore the fact that it was a period of constant armed conflicts with the non-believers which cost many valuable lives of the closest relatives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The martyrdom of such devotees had left their widows and children helpless and without any sources of sustenance. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was, therefore, obliged to marry the widows like Hafsa, Zaynab bint Khuzaimah and Umm-e-Salamah up to 4 AH. In 5 AH, he married Juwayriyyah a widow from Banu Mustaliq which brought her entire tribe under the fold of Islam. In the same year the Prophet ﷺ married Zaynab bint Jahsh who had been divorced by Zaid. With the exception of Juwayriah, the driving purpose behind these marriages had been to provide protection to the widows of the closest relatives who had sacrificed themselves for Islam. Besides this, the marriages with widows i.e. Juwayriah bint Harith, Umm Habibah bint abi Sufyan, Saffiyah bint Huyay and Maimoonah bint Harith were also prompted by political considerations to promote Islam. Consequently, the said marriages had been extremely beneficial to bring more and more people under the fold of Islam. The Lord had, therefore, allowed the Holy Prophet ﷺ to use his own discretion to marry women as per his requirement. God said:

O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives to whom thou hast paid their dowers; and those whom thy right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom Allah has assigned to thee; and daughters of thy paternal uncles and aunts, and daughters of thy maternal uncles and aunts, who migrated (from Makka) with thee; and any believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the Prophet wishes to wed her; - **this only for thee, and not for the Believers (at large)**; We know what We have appointed for them as to their wives and the captives whom their right hands possess; - in order that there should be no difficulty for thee. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.⁹⁹

Commenting on this verse which grants special permission to the Holy Prophet ﷺ for additional marriages including

⁹⁹ Al-Qur'an 33:50 Yusuf Ali.

his marriage with Zaynab bint Jahsh, Maulana Maududi writes that:

Before his marriage with Zaynab, the Prophet ﷺ already had four wives – Sawdah, A'isheh, Hafsa and Umm Salamah. Zaynab was, therefore, his fifth wife. This provided his detractors with a pretext to raise objections against him and even some Muslims were carried away by their malicious propaganda. In particular, they were particularly rankled at the fact that the Prophet ﷺ had five wives whereas other Muslims had been restrained from marrying more than four.¹⁰⁰

The Almighty had allowed the Holy Prophet ﷺ temporarily to marry some of the widows and the divorcees belonging to influential or noble families of Arabia with the purpose of fast expansion of Islam.

Marriages to Transmit Islamic Teachings

Islam is the only religion that emphasized the transmission of Islamic and other education among women just as it was being done among the male companions of the Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ

Seeking knowledge is compulsory for each and every Muslim (i.e. both male and female).¹⁰¹

As such right from the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ till today millions of women learnt the Qur'an by heart and they had extensive knowledge about all the precepts of Islam. The Lord too had promised women with many of His special favors to reward them for the periods of menstruation and the postpartum period (about 40 days) during which they could not offer the prayers. We have already discussed the same in our chapter 2 of our book

¹⁰⁰ *Towards Understanding the Qur'an*, Vol. IX, Syed Abul A'la Mawdudi, Eng. Tr. By Zafar Ishaq Ansari, (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 2009), p. 19.

¹⁰¹ *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Hadith No. 224, *Sahih Tirmidhi*, Hadith No. 74.

'*Islam as Emancipator of Women*'. God, therefore, did not deprive women of His bounties and the blessings provided they did not swerve from the faith and law of the Lord.

Jews had habitually been inflicting different aspersions on prophets like Noah, Abraham, Lot, Moses, David Jesus and others. It was, therefore, nothing new for them to treat the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the same manner. For details about their false allegations against earlier prophets please refer to our book '*Israelites vs. Other Nations*'.

Most of the Jews refused to receive Jesus as a prophet of the Lord. Many of them accused him as an illegitimate son of Mary. Jews commonly believed that Jesus was the son of a Roman soldier named Pandera or Pantera and refer to him as '*Ben Stada*'. In Talmud, we find:

"It is taught that Rabbi Eliezer said to the Wise, "Did not Ben Stada bring spells from Egypt in a cut in his flesh?" They said to him, "He was a fool, and they do not bring evidence from a fool." Ben Stada is Ben Pantera. Rabbi Hisda said, "The husband was Stada, the lover was Pantera." The husband was "actually" Pappos ben Judah, the mother was Stada. The mother was Miriam "Mary" the dresser of women's hair. As we say in Pumbeditha, "She has been false to "satath da" her husband." (b. Shabbat 104b).¹⁰²

Similarly, the ancient Greek philosopher Celsus whose original work has been lost but in Origen's account of it Jesus was depicted as the result of an affair between the mother Mary and a Roman soldier. He said she was convicted of adultery and had a child by a certain soldier named Pantera.¹⁰³ Similarly, there are certain books that repeat the same falsehood e.g. '*JESUS the Evidence*' records that:

Yeshu the Nazarene', his association with Galilee, and his accrediting with healings and 'sorcery', indicates beyond reasonable doubt that this Yeshu was one and the same as the Jesus of the gospels. 'Jesus' is, in fact, the usual Graeco-Roman adaptation of the Semitic 'Yeshu'. The 'ben Pantera'

¹⁰² Robert E. van Voorst, *Jesus outside the New Testament* (B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI., 2000), p. 109.

¹⁰³ Wikipedia, s.v. *Tiberius Julius Abdes Pantera*.

crops up repeatedly in late Jewish references, which were more scurrilous than those of the earlier, Tannaitic period. They claim Jesus/Yeshu to have been the son of an illegitimate union between his mother Miriam, or Mary, and a Roman soldier variously called Pandera, Pantera or Panthera. That a rumour of this kind, whether or not it was soundly based, was at least early in origin is incontrovertible because the Christian writer Origen tells us that he heard about it from the second-century pagan philosopher Celsus. Celsus in his turn claimed to have heard it from a Jew, so the story seems to have been in circulation around 150 AD. Christian writers have tended to dismiss this story as a malicious piece of invention, suggesting that 'Panthera' may have been a corruption of 'parthenos' or virgin. Intriguingly their interpretation fell a little flat with the discovery at Bingerbrück in Germany of the tombstone of one Tiberius Julius Abdes Panthera, a Roman archer from Sidon in Phoenicia. Although it would be fanciful seriously to suggest that Panthera was Jesus' real father, the tombstone does happen to date from the appropriate early Roman Imperial period.

In this same connection, a peculiarity of the genealogy ascribed to Jesus in the Mathew gospel is that the only four female ancestors named – Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba – each happen to have been 'fallen women'. Tamar was a temple prostitute; Rahab was the madam of a brothel; Ruth, the most moral, indulged in some pretty shameless sexual exploitation; and Bathsheba committed adultery with King David. Was the author of the Matthew genealogy implying something about the only other woman mentioned, Mary herself? From the Christian viewpoint it is of course possible to interpret the same evidence quite differently, as confirmation that there was something strange and supernatural about the circumstances surrounding Jesus' paternity.¹⁰⁴

It is strange enough that history contains no credible account of the life and works of Jesus Christ. Instead of Jesus of history, we find Christ of faith constructed by the Gospels e.g. Mark ascribed to Jesus 37 quotations of the OT while Mathew adds another 28. All the gospels, therefore, were bent upon depicting Jesus Christ as fulfillment of certain parts of the O.T. Instead of historical record, therefore, they depicted Christ of faith simply by shifting from future to the past. Many scholars in the West have, therefore, been denying the actual existence of Jesus Christ. To authenticate the same from history, the

¹⁰⁴ '*JESUS the Evidence*' by Ian Wilson (London: Pan Books Ltd 1985), p. 55.

Christians had been catching at a straw e.g. they point out to a passage in the '*Works of Flavious Josephus*' as quoted below:

Now, there was about this time Jesus a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works; a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.¹⁰⁵

Scholars today, however, deny the genuineness of the excerpt quoted above which due to paucity of the space at our disposal cannot be discussed in the present text. Without going into details, therefore, we may point out that we had copied passage No. 3 of the 3rd chapter of book XVIII of the *Antiquities* of Josephus. The excerpt precedes the long passage No. 4 describing that a virtuous and beautiful Roman woman named *Paulina* was called to the temple of Isis deceptively by Dasius Mundus a high ranking Roman knight who raped her there posing himself as God Anubis. It was perhaps due to some similitude in the stories that they were put in a consecutive order. We, however, think that instead of lending any authenticity to the existence of Jesus Christ the putting together of the stories has actually added uncertainty and disgrace to the birth and existence of a great prophet of the Lord. Since the Qur'an has emphatically rebutted any blemish on Mary and upholds the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ, therefore, the Muslims venerate him as one of the most prominent prophets of the Lord. For a comparative study of the narratives, we reproduce below the Qur'anic version about the birth and esteemed position of Jesus Christ by starting from Mary. God revealed that:

¹⁰⁵ Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities*, Book XVIII, Ch. 3.

37. Right graciously did her Lord accept her: He made her grow in purity and beauty: To the care of Zakariya was she assigned. Every time that he entered (Her) chamber to see her, He found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Mary! Whence (comes) this to you?" She said: "From Allah: for Allah Provides sustenance to whom He pleases without measure." (.....) **42.** Behold! the angels said: "O Mary! Allah hath chosen Thee and purified thee- chosen Thee above the women of all nations. **43.** "O Mary! worship Thy Lord devoutly: prostrate thyself, and bow down (in prayer) with those who bow down." **44.** This is part of the tidings of the things Unseen, which we reveal unto Thee (O Messenger.) by inspiration: Thou wast not with them when They cast lots with arrows, As to which of them should be charged with the care of Mary: nor wast Thou with them when They disputed (the point). **45.** Behold! The angels said: "O Mary! Allah giveth Thee glad tidings of a word from him: His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held In honour In This world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah. **46.** "He shall speak to the people In childhood and In maturity. and He shall be (of the company) of the righteous." **47.** she said: "O My Lord! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me?" He said: "Even so: Allah createth what He willeth: when He hath decreed a plan, He but saith to it, 'Be,' and it is! **48.** "And Allah will teach Him the Book and Wisdom, the law and the Gospel, **49.** "And (appoint him) an apostle to the Children of Israel, (with This message): "I have come to you, with a Sign from your Lord, In that I make for you out of clay, As it Were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave: and I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I quicken the dead, by Allah's leave; and I declare to you what ye eat, and what ye store In your houses. surely therein is a Sign for you if ye did believe; **50.** ""(I have come to you), to attest the law which was before Me. and to make lawful to you part of what was (Before) forbidden to you; I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. so fear Allah, and obey Me. **51.** ""It is Allah who is My Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a way that is straight." **52.** when Jesus found unbelief on their part He said: "Who will be My helpers to (the work of) Allah." said the disciples: "We are Allah.s helpers: we believe In Allah, and do Thou bear witness that we are Muslims. **53.** "Our Lord! We believe In what Thou hast revealed, and we follow the Messenger. Then write us down among those who bear witness." **54.** And (the unbelievers) plotted and planned, and Allah too planned, and the best of planners is Allah. **55.** Behold! Allah said: "O Jesus! I will take Thee and raise Thee to Myself and Clear Thee (of the falsehoods) of those who blaspheme; I will make those who follow Thee superior to those who reject Faith, to the Day of

Resurrection: then shall ye all return unto me, and I will judge between you of the matters wherein ye dispute. **56.** "As to those who reject Faith, I will punish them with terrible agony In This world and In the Hereafter, nor will They have anyone to help." **57.** "As to those who believe and work righteousness, Allah will pay them (in full) their reward; but Allah loveth not those who do wrong." **58.** "This is what we rehearse unto Thee of the Signs and the Message of wisdom." **59.** the similitude of Jesus before Allah is As that of Adam; He created Him from dust, then said to him: "Be". and He was. **60.** the truth (comes) from Allah alone; so be not of those who doubt.¹⁰⁶

The history of the world, therefore, bears witness to the fact that the slander about Jesus by the Jews failed to impair his piety or popularity to prevent people from believing in him. In this respect, Jews miserably failed to prevent people from believing in the truth preached by Jesus Christ. Similarly, in spite of all scandals against the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ Islam continued to flourish at the fastest speed as compared to other religions in the world.

Some of such scandals also involved Zaid son of Haritha and Zaynab bint Jahsh who was married by the Holy Prophet ﷺ after her divorce by Zaid. We shall, therefore, be describing the life history of each of the personalities mentioned above along with the role played by them to implement marital reforms of Islam.

Prohibition to Marry More Women

Since the danger of attack from the people of Makkah being the strongest enemies of Islam had ended with the marriage of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with Umm-e-Habibah bint Abu Sufyan and Maimoonah bint Al-Harith and from the Jews after the marriage of Safiyah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ by the end of 7 AH, there had been no impelling necessity to establish additional political

¹⁰⁶ Al-Qur'an 3:37, 42-60 Yousuf Ali.

relationship with other tribes of Arabia. The Lord, therefore, revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that:

It is not lawful for thee (to marry more) women after this, nor to change them for (other) wives, even though their beauty attract thee, except any thy right hand should possess (as handmaidens): and Allah doth watch over all things.¹⁰⁷

Consequently, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not marry any woman during last 3 and a half years of his life i.e. from Dhil-Qaad 7 AH to 12th of Rabee-ul-Awwal 11 AH. This shows that in the verses 50 and 51 of Surah 33 quoted earlier, the Almighty had given a temporary relaxation for about 4 years to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry more women. **This prohibition to change wives pertained only to the person of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and it was not binding on other Muslims.** Similarly, we find that the Tahajjud Prayer had been made mandatory only for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and not for other believers. God said:

Establish regular prayers - at the sun's decline till the darkness of the night, and the morning prayer and reading: for the prayer and reading in the morning carry their testimony. **And pray in the small watches of the morning: (it would be) an additional prayer (or spiritual profit) for thee:** soon will thy Lord raise thee to a Station of Praise and Glory!¹⁰⁸

As such, the accusations of the Jews and the Christians that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had himself carved out certain relaxations for his personal benefit alone lose their strength when we find that the Almighty also had imposed specific restrictions on him not to marry any other woman after the revelation and also not to change any of his existing wives. If we go through the history of Judaism and Christianity, we shall find many such examples where certain things were granted only to the prophets and the kings while the same were not allowed to each and every believer among them. As regards the close personal contact of the Almighty with the Holy Prophet ﷺ it was nothing new. The Lord had

¹⁰⁷ Al-Qur'an 33:52 Yusuf Ali.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 17:78-79 (Yusuf Ali).

always been remaining in close contact with all of His prophets to provide day to day guidance to them. The critics of Islam also raise objection against the prohibition to the believers to marry the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. God said:

... Nor is it right for you that ye should annoy Allah's Messenger, or that ye should marry his widows after him at any time. Truly such a thing is in Allah's sight an enormity.¹⁰⁹

This injunction was just a reminder of traditions of the Prophets from Adam to Jesus. **We find no instance that the widow of any of the prophets had ever been married by one of his followers.** The Prohibition to marry widow of the Prophet also emanates from the following:

The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves, **and his wives are their mothers....**¹¹⁰

Obviously no one could be allowed to marry his mother. No revealed religion ever allowed the same. Since the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had to perfect the law, therefore, the Lord prohibited the believers from marrying any of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ. In this respect, the Old Testament had gone to the extent of disallowing a priest to marry a widow other than the widow of a priest (Eze 44:22 KJV). Conversely, it implies that an ordinary man could not have married the widow of a priest. Since Muhammad was the last one among the prophets and no prophet was likely to come after him, therefore, his wives had to be venerated as mothers of the believers. Hence no one among them was allowed to marry them. As such, there was nothing special in this prohibition.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 33:53 (Yusuf Ali).

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 33:6 (Yusuf Ali).

SAYYIDA AISHAH BINT ABU BAKR

The Family of Sayyidina Abu Bakr

Sayyidina Abu Bakr had married Qutaylah bint Abd-al-Uzza who bore him Abdullah and Asma bint Abu Bakr. He also married Umm-e-Romman who gave birth to Abdurrahman and Aishah. **According to the historians like Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri, all these four issues of Abu Bakr were born during Jahiliyyah (i.e. before Nabvi).** Later on Sayyidina Abu Bakr also married Asma bint Amees from whom Muhammad b. Abi Bakr was born in 10th of Hijrah.¹¹¹ Abdurrahman son of Abu Bakr:

Abdurrahman had been the eldest issue of Sayyidina Abu Bakr. Even Sayyida Asma might have been born later than him. Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed has provided us with the list of the persons chosen by the Quraish to assassinate the Holy Prophet ﷺ on the night of Hijrah. They included 1) Abdurrahman b. Abu Bakr, 2) Ikrama b. Abi Jahl, 3) Khalid b. Waleed, 4) Amr b. Al-Aas, 5) Talib b. Abi Talib, and 6) Aqeel b. Abi Talib along with certain others.¹¹² Jubair b. Mut'im was also a member of the party. The order of narrative adopted by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed, therefore, shows Abdurrahman at No. 1 among the enemies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He, therefore, continued to oppose Islam and had been joining the battles of Badr, Uhud and Khandaq to eliminate Islam. He sought a duel against the Muslims in the battle of Uhud. Later on converting to Islam after the Truce of Hdaybiah, he earned a great name as a brave and fierce fighter of Muslims. During the conquests of Syria, he had been playing the prominent role of Mubarizoon (Duel fighters) companions who fought from the side of Muslims in which he always turned out to be successful by slaying many champions of the enemies.

¹¹¹ Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri, *History of Nations and Kings*, (Urdu), Vol. II, (Karachi: M. A. Jinnah Rd. Urdu Bazar, 2003), p. 616-617.

¹¹² Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiq*, (Karachi: Mashkoor Academy), pg. 513-514.

According to Ibn-e-Kathir, Sayyida Asma was 10 years elder than Sayyida Aishah.¹¹³ In spite of being lean and thin in physique Aishah the sister of such a brave companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had also been taking part in the battles of Badr, Uhud, Banu Mustaliq and others. **We, therefore, see no reasons to believe that she might have been just 10 or 11 years old during the battles of Badr and Uhud.** We also rule out her possibility of being 19 years younger than Abdurrahman. Had it been so, the Historians would have described it as an unusual event about the age-gap between an elder brother and his sister. It is also likely that both sisters were of the same age or Sayyida Aisha might have been older than Sayyida Asma. The Nikah of Sayyida Aishah with Jubair, Son of Mutim b. Addi had been solemnized in about 8 or 9 Nabvi. **According to the Ahadith emanating from Hisham b. Urwa, Aishah (RA) could not have been more than five years when her Nikaah was solemnized with Jubair b. Mutim.** As against this, Jubair was in his full maturity and strength even at the time when Mutim b. Addi his father had granted asylum to Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ on his return from Taif about 1 year before Hijra. Jubair being the eldest son of Mutim b. Addi was serving as leader of the group. It was due to his maturity, strength and bravery that the the assembly of Quraish at Dar-ul-Nadwa had chosen him as a member of the party assigned the task of assassinating the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Background of the Marriage of the Prophet ﷺ:

As stated earlier Khadijah-tul-Kubra had been the first wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. He had married her when he was 25 years old and Khadijah had been a widow aged about 40 years.¹¹⁴ They lived as a loving pair for about 25 years thereafter till the death of khadija-tul-Kubra

¹¹³ Abu-al-Fidaa Imad-ud-Din Ibn-e-Kathir, *Albidaya Wal-Nihaya* (Urdu), Vol. 8 (Karachi: Nafees Academy, Urdu Bazar, 1989), p. 1366.

¹¹⁴ Many scholars disagree with the age of Sayyida Khadijah-tul-Kubra at the time of her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. With credible arguments they argue that she was between 25 to 30 years.

in 10th year of Nubuwwah. Khadijah had born 2 sons and 4 daughters to Muhammad ﷺ when she died at the age of 65 years. Both of her sons had died during infancy during her life. Two of her elder daughters i.e. Zaynab and Ruqayyah had already been married to Abu-al-Aas and Uthman bin Affan respectively while the two younger daughters i.e. Umm-e-Kalthum and Fatimah had not been married till then. Khadijah's death had, therefore, created immediate necessity for the prophet to remarry not only for companionship but also to relieve him from the household responsibilities so that he could devote himself entirely to the preaching and promotion of Islam. Muhammad ﷺ was of 50 years at the time of Khadijah's death. He was grief stricken also for the death of his uncle Abu Talib when Khawla bint Hakeem the wife of Sayyidina Uthman bin Mazoon visited him and suggested him to marry again. On asking by the Prophet ﷺ about some suitable suggestion, she replied that he could marry either a Bikrin البكر (virgin) or another one who was ثيبه i.e. widow.

The virgin was Aysha daughter of Abu Bakr and the widow was Sawda bint Zamaa. This shows that even the virgin i.e. Ayshah might have been in the marriageable age necessary for the companionship of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to relieve him from the worries about the household affairs. Had Aisha been 6 years old at that time she needed someone else to groom her than to take up the responsibilities of a housewife which involves multiplicity of matters other than serving as a sex partner with her husband. In such circumstances, it would have been a mockery on the part of Khawla to suggest the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry Aishah. Instead of providing any companionship or relief to the Holy Prophet ﷺ from the internal affairs, **this marriage with a child would have added to his anxieties.** Khawlah's suggestion for marrying Aishah could be sensible only if Sayyida Aishah was mature enough for marriage and for looking after the household affairs effectively. Even the circumstantial evidence affirms the same.

Jubayr b. Mutim

Mutim b. Addi the chief of Banu Nawfal clan of Banu Quraish tribe, had six or seven fully grown up sons capable to bear arms who went with him to Kaaba to announce asylum¹¹⁵ for the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ on his return from Taif. **Jubayr** was perhaps the eldest, the most powerful and brave among them. Although we cannot determine his exact age at the time of his Nikaah / betrothel with Sayyida Aysha yet we can assume of some equality of his age with Zubayr b. Awwam. His age at the time of Nikah with Sayyida Aysha about 4 or 5 years before Hijra can, therefore, be assessed as 23 or 24 years. His full maturity is also evident from the fact that he represented Mutim b. Addi in the secret meeting of the chiefs of Quraysh at Dar-ul-Nadwa to chalk out a plan to assassinate the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.¹¹⁶

In the absence of sound reasons or compulsion for a mismatched marriage, we have reasons to believe that Sayyida Aysha had some similarity in age with Sayyida Asma and both of them were mature enough for marriage or betrothel at the time. Let the supporters of 6/9 years as the age of Ayshah at the time of her marriage and consummation thereof by the Holy Prophet ﷺ support their view point by referring to the urgency compelling Abu Bakr to marry his daughter Aysha at age of 4-5 years with Jubayr at the time he was marrying Asma aged about 24 years with Zubayr (RA). After dissolution of her marriage with Jubayr, Sayyidina Abu Bakr solemnized her Nikaah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ who always had a firm control on his passions under guidance from the Lord. He also cannot be supposed to be suffering from sex starvation since Sayyida Sawda had joined him as partner of his life. Had some sex urgency been there, the prophet had the opportunity to marry his beautiful cousin Zaynab daughter of Jahash whose first husband had died shortly before Hijra whereafter she continued to suffer from widowhood till the

¹¹⁵ Peer Karam Shah, *Zia-un-Nabi* (Urdu) Vol. II (Lahore: Zia-ul-Qur'an publications, Ganj Bakhsh Rd. 1418 AH), p. 452.

¹¹⁶ Muhammad b. Jareer Tabri, *Tareekh-ul-Umam wa-al Mulook* (Urdu tr. Sayyid M. Ibraheem) Vol. II, (Karachi: Dar-al-Ishaat Urdu Bazzr, 2003), p. 128.

Holy Prophet ﷺ married her with Zayd b. Haritha. This shows that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had no urge to consume his marriage with a child of 9 years. As against this, we firmly believe that Ayshah might have been of 19 or 29 years at the time of the consummation of her marriage as deduced by various scholars along with their arguments to support their viewpoint. We shall, therefore, be retouching the issue in the forthcoming discussion.

Father of Jubair i.e. Mutim b. Addi had been the chief of his powerful tribe at Makkah. His brother Taima b. Addi had also been among the leading enemies of Islam. Mutim had joined the third deputation of the Quraish to prevent abu Talib from protecting Muhammad ﷺ in 7 BH. He also has been reported as the greatest adversary of the Holy Prophet's narrative about Miraaaj. In spite of all this, it was due to his gracious and sociable nature that the Holy Prophet ﷺ continued to venerate him as a nobility among the Quraysh. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had visited Taif to preach faith there about 1 year before Hijra in the company of Zaid b. Haritha. The people of Taif not only refused to receive him properly but also ridiculed and injured him severely. Apprehending persecution from the Quraysh at Makkah on his return, the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent a messenger to Akhnas b. Shareek Thaqafi and Suhail b. Amr to seek protection from them. On refusal from both of them the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent Zaid b. Haritha to Mutim b. Addi who willingly agreed to provide the asylum. The very next morning, Mutim b. Addi and his six or seven sons armed themselves to guard the prophet during his Tawaf of Kaaba. It was due to the asylum provided by Mutim b. Addi that the chiefs of Quraysh did not maltreat the prophet, thereafter. Besides this, we also know that Saad b. Ubada had participated in the secret 2nd pledge (ببعت عقبه ثانيه) of Madinan visitors to Makkah. Learning about the same, the Makkans started to pursue them. They got hold of saad and subjected him to great tortures. Mutim and Harith b. Harb had rescued Saad from them. Such had been the reasons that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had a soft corner for Mutim b. Addi.

Although Mutim died as a non-believer yet in view of his veneration with the Muslims, the Quraysh chose Jubayr his

son to lead the delegation to Medina to seek release of the **captives of the battle of Badr**. Jubayr was chosen due to his father's noble treatment with the Muslim converts. All this shows that instead of being just a teenager, Jubayr might have been a man of about 30 years sagacious enough to negotiate the release of the captives of battle of Badr. He also owned **Wahshy ibn Harb, the slave who killed Hamza ibn 'Abdul Muttalib during the battle of Uhud**. After the truce of Hdaybiyah, Jubayr had the privilege to become a Muslim companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Later on Jubayr b. Mut'im also had the privilege to lead the Janaza prayer¹¹⁷ of Sayyidina Uthman b. Affan after his assassination in 35 AH and died as a staunch Muslim in about 57/59 AH.

Isn't it ridiculous, therefore, to presume that such a mature person like Jubayr might have chosen a child of five years to serve as his companion in life and sex partner as a wife? We, therefore, can ascribe no credence to the reports emanating from Kufah that Sayyida Aishah was just six years old at the time of her Nikaah or the consummation of her marriage was made when she was 9 lunar years old. The report also conflicts with the **historical report of Tabri** describing Aishah's birth during Jahiliyyah according to which, she must have been of 15/16 years or more at the time of the consummation of her marriage in Shawwal 1 AH.

There could be no doubt about maturity and full strength (بلغ الشده) of Jubair b. Mutim. His nikah with Sayyida Aishah could be considered reasonable only if Sayyida Aisha had attained her Bulooqh by that time. The Nikaah of Sayyida Aishah with Jubair b. Mutim seems to have been solemnized some time earlier than Sayyida Asma's Nikaah with Zubair b. Awwam. Instead of solemnizing his Nikaah with a child of four or five years, Jubair b. Mutim could have preferred to marry Sayyida Asma than to marry a child of four or five years because according to Ahadith of Hisham b. Urwa she should have been 19 years younger than her elder sister Asma. In such an event, **we also find no good reasons or compulsion for Sayyidina Abu Bakr to perform Nikaah of Sayyida Asma aged about**

¹¹⁷ Moulvi Muhammad Akbar Shah Najeeb Abadi, *Tareekh-e-Islam* (Urdu), Vol. I, (Lahore: Alfaisal Publications, Urdu Bazar, 1991), p. 415.

24-25 years with Zubayr (RA) and Sayyida Aishah aged 5 years with Jurbayr b. Mutim during the same period of time. As such, those who insist on making true the 2nd century narrative of Hisham b. Urwa must also think of the damage the tender aged narrative causes to the most exalted moral behavior of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and image of the Islamic society involved in wide-spread child molestation under the cover of the Sunnah of their prophet ﷺ. They must also provide us with the reasons for such inordinate difference in the ages of two daughters of Sayyidina Abu Bakr being married during the same period of time.

A short reference to Sayyida Aishah had already been made in our chapter titled '*Wives of the Prophet*' ﷺ. We will like to add here that Ayesha had been a beautiful girl of fair color. According to many scholars, the Prophet ﷺ used to call her as حميرا meaning the one having red hair. Sayyida Aishah actually enjoyed such a competence in the Islamic jurisprudence that no one else than Abdullah b. Abbas could be counted as a peer with Sayyida Aysha at Medina. Besides this, Sayyida Aysha had the distinction of knowing the background and the import of different Ayahs of Qur'an as well as Ahadith to extract true implication of the same. The Hadith to show her as a child than an authoritative figure, therefore, aims at reducing her nobility, credibility, decision making and authority on the interpretation of Qur'an and jurisprudence of Islam.

Ayesha had no Children from the Prophet ﷺ. She was extremely pious and god-fearing woman devoting most of her time to worship the LORD or to teach faith to women as well as men. **She lived for about 48 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ in Rabee-ul-Awwal 11 A.H. and died in 58 A.H. at the age of about 74 years.** She was beautiful, intelligent and the most learned wife of the Prophet ﷺ who excelled all women of her time as regards the knowledge of Qur'an and traditions of the Prophet. She also was the most prominent expert among women in the jurisprudence of Islam. It was said that a quarter of all legal rulings of Islam were transmitted through her. She preserved and narrated about 2210 Ahadith (Sayings of the Prophet ﷺ). Large number of women used to learn about

the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ from her. Even some of the prominent companions of the Prophet ﷺ used to call on her for solution of various intricate issues and she used to reply their questions from behind the veil. The Hadith quoted below suggests perfection of Sayyida Aishah as regards excellence of knowledge, piety and righteousness.

Narrated Abu Musa Al-Ashari: The Prophet said, "The superiority of 'Aysha to other ladies is like the superiority of Tharid (i.e. meat and bread dish) to other meals. Many men reached the level of perfection, but no woman reached such a level except Mary, the daughter of Imran and Asia, the wife of Pharaoh."¹¹⁸

The Prophet's marriage with Aysha reformed the old traditions of the Arabs as detailed below:

1. The Arabs traditionally believed Shawwal as an ill-fated month. They, therefore, avoided marriages during Shawwal. The Prophet's Nikaah with Aysha occurred in Shawwal at Makkah and subsequently, even her joining with him in Shawwal about two or three years later abolished the superstition that it was hapless to marry in the month of Shawwal.

2. The Prophet ﷺ used to call Abu Bakr as his brother. The Arabs traditionally did not marry the sister or daughter of those, they had chosen or addressed as their brethren. The Prophet's marriage with Aysha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, therefore, nullified the tradition of taking a brother by adoption as one's real brother.

It is pertinent to note here that **she was the only virgin to be married by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ**. All other wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ whether young or old were widows or divorcees or both. Unluckily, this most beloved wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been the worst victim of the calumnies of the non believers, Munafiqoon and even a faction from the Muslim fraternity. It was, therefore, felt necessary that true picture of the events may be presented before the readers so that they may know the truth. It was due to the utmost importance of the issue that we have devoted major part of this volume to discuss the

¹¹⁸ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 4, Book 55, Hadith No. 643.

accusations against Sayyida Aishah and our reply to the same.

Age of Aysha at the Time of Consummation of Her Marriage

The consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 lunar years is the favorite issue being exploited and criticized bitterly by the so-called orientlists and the Christian missionaries today. For this, they rely primarily on certain traditions originating from Kufah in Iraq during 185-189 AH. Such reports were later on incorporated in the five out of six books of ***Sihah Sittah compiled during 232-302 AH***. These reports did not originate from Makkah, Medina or Hijaz. Ali b. Mus'hir (116-189 AH) had been the primary source to publicise the report attributed to Hisham b. Urwa at Kufah. Imam Bukhari born in Shawwal 194 AH at Bukhara had started collecting and scrutinizing the Ahadith at the age of 16 years in 210 AH. He had gone to Makkah for Hajj along with his mother and his elder brother Ahmed b. Ismaeel who returned to Bukhara but Imam Bukhari continued to stay at Makkah to acquire more competence in the religious studies from scholars there. Imam Abdurrazzaq Sanaani had been living up to 210 AH due to which Imam Bukhari intended to visit Yemen for further knowledge about Ahadith. He had to drop the said journey on learning that Abdurrazzaq had already died. He, therefore, learnt certain Ahadith from one of the disciples of Abdurrazzaq.

Imam Bukhari had himself said that he had to make at least two visits to Egypt, Syria, Aljazeera etc. and four times to Basra besides spending about six years in Hijaz. He, however, visited Kufah several times for which he provided no definite number to the readers.¹¹⁹ He also had visited many other places for the correction and scrutinization of Ahadith which we need not record in detail here. Ultimately he returned to Bukhara and compiled the book containing most laboriously scrutinized Ahadith

¹¹⁹ Mufti Muhammad Shareef-ul-Haq, *Nuzhat-ul-Qari, Sharah Saheeh Bukhari*, (Urdu), Vol. I, (Lahore: Urdu Bazar, 2007), p. 108-109.

consisting of about 7397 Ahadith. Actually, Imam Bukhari had memorized or collected about 600,000 Ahadith from the scholars which also contained repetition of the same Hadith with different chains of narrators. To avoid the unnecessary repetition, therefore, he recorded only one out of 50 or 60 versions of the same hadith with the best of the credentials (إسناد) available to him. It was due to extreme care and caution along with the personal devotion and integrity of Imam Bukhari that the brief compilation of Ahadith collected by him received wide-spread appreciation of the masses among the Sunni Muslim generations after him. It is of utmost importance to note here that **scholars of Ahadith had been more strict to scrutinize the Ahadith that pertained to Law and Jurisprudence of Islam than the reports of historical events or the battles during the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ**. As regards others, they did not insist on strict evidence or to find compatibility of the event with the precepts of the Qur'an or the reported words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. Such reports could, therefore, neither be infalliable nor absolutely correct like the Quranic text. No Muhaddith, therefore, ever claimed inerrancy about his collections.

All the Ahadith about the age of Sayyida Aishah quoted by Imam Bukhari originated either at Kufah or Basra. All the reporters of the Ahadith at the lower legs belong to Kufah or Basra but they collectively culminate in Hisham b. Urwa from Urwa from Sayyida Aishah al-Siddiqah of Medina. It is, therefore, strange to observe in spite of having travelled throughout the Islamic centres in the world including Makkah and Medina Imam Bukhari did not come across any reporter of these Ahadith outside Kufah or Iraq. The fact is that the Hadith actually did not exist anywhere in the world before its publication by Ali bin Mus'hir at Kufah during 185-189 AH.

There had been another important source describing tender age of Sayyida Aishah reported through Abdurrazzaq (126-211 AH) a Shiite from Yemen. He reported it with the chain of Maamar from Zuhri from Urwa from Sayyida Aishah. **Scholars accuse Abdurrazzaq not only for his religious convictions but also observe that he used to fabricate the Ahadith or to make unauthorized additions or deletions in the same.** For details please refer to the life account of Abdurrazzaq in Chapter on 'Prominent Figures in Chain of Narrators', s.v.

'*Abdurrazzaq*'. Scholars also unanimously believe that Imam Zuhri had neither seen or heard Urwa b. Zubayr during his life. Hence no credence can be accorded to the reports of Zuhri from Urwa.

Imam Muslim has also quoted another Hadith to the same effect with the following chain of narrators:

'Abu Muavia from Aamash from Ibrahim from Aswad from Aishah'

Among them, Aswad i.e. Aswad b. Yazid al-Nakhi (d. 75 AH) a tabi'ee from Kufah enjoyed good repute for his trustworthiness. He might have been the uncle of the famous scholar Ibrahim bin Yazid al-Nakhi. Reportedly, Aswad had visited Makkah and Medina from 40-80 times for Hajj or Umra etc. The likelihood of his hearing certain Ahadith from Sayyida Aishah herself had not, therefore, been questioned by any of the critics. Scholars take him as an extremely pious person and no one doubts his credibility. Although both Aswad and Ibraheem Nakhii (50-96 AH) were reliable reporters and Aamash (61-148 AH) too enjoyed great reputation for his scholarship and credibility yet according to some of the Muhaddithin **Aamash was a Mudallis** (One who did not name his teacher), **Mursil** (who narrates Ahadith where the narrator between the Successor and Muhammad is omitted) and **Ghali Shia**.¹²⁰ For further details please refer to page 109-110 of the book *Tahqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeen Nyaz Ahmed.

Reportedly, Ibrahim Nakhi had about 37 famous disciples or reporters of Ahadith from him. The list has been given below:

روى عنه: الحكم بن عتيبة وعمرو بن مرة الجملي وحامد بن أبي سليمان وسماك بن حرب والمغيرة بن مقسم وأبو معشر زياد بن كليب وأبو حصين عثمان بن عاصم ومنصور بن المعتمر وعبيدة بن معتب الضبي وإبراهيم بن محاجر البجلي والحارث بن يزيد العكلي وسليمان

¹²⁰ Minority Shia Muslim groups who ascribe divine characteristics to Sayyidina Ali and some of his descendants.

بن مهران الأعمش وعبد الله بن عون وشباك الضبي وشعيب بن الحجاب الأزدي وعطاء بن السائب وعبد الرحمن بن أبي الشعثاء المحاربي وعبد الله بن شبرمة وعلي بن مدرك وفضيل بن عمرو الفقيهي وهشام بن عائد الأسدي وواصل بن حيان الأحدب وزيد اليامي ومحمد بن خالد الضبي ومحمد بن سوقة ويزيد بن أبي زياد وأبو حمزة ميمون الأعور وعامر الشعبي والحر بن مسكين والحسن بن عبيد الله النخعي وحكيم بن جبير والزبير بن عدي وأبو يعفور عبد الرحمن بن عبيد بن نسطاس وعبد الملك بن إلياس الشيباني الأعور وأبو إسحاق السبيعي وأبو العنيس عمرو بن مروان النخعي وغالب أبو الهذيل

It is worth noting here that Salman b. Mehran al-Aamash had been the only one out of the afore-stated 37 disciples of Ibrahim Nakhi to report the Hadith about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah from Ibrahim and Aswad. It is, therefore, questionable why none out of the other disciples of Ibrahim Nakhi did report this Hadith. The report also suffers from many other lacunas. In spite of his 40 to 80 visits to Makkah and Medina, Aswad b. Yazid did not hear this Hadith from any other companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ except Aishah nor any of the Muhaddithin or the Tabieen living there did report it to Aswad b. Yazid. Although Sayyida Aishah had died in 58 AH yet Aswad b. Yazeed had reportedly lived up to 75 AH. Sayyida Asmaa the elder sister of Sayyida Aishah was living up to 73 AH. Hence, even after the death of Sayyida Aishah, Aswad b. Yazeed might have been calling on Sayyida Asmaa frequently during the next 15 years i.e. 58 AH to 73 AH. Isn't it strange that Sayyida Asmaa did not report anything about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah to Aswad b. Yazeed during those visits?

Similarly, the reporter at the lowest leg i.e. Abu Muawiah (113-194 AH) too had been a Mudallis. According to Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed he was also a Gali Shiah (pg. 110). Abdullah b. Ahmad reported about him that:

وقال عبد الله بن أحمد عن أبيه: كان أبو معاوية إذا سئل عن أحاديث الأعمش يقول: قد صار حديث الأعمش في فمي علقاً أو أمر لكثرة ما تردد عليه ثم قال أي أبو معاوية في غير حديث الأعمش مضطرب، لا يحفظها حفظاً جيداً. وسمعت أبي يقول: كان والله حافظاً للقرآن

And Abdullah bin Ahmed reported from his father that whenever Abu Muawiah was asked about the Ahadith of Aamash, he would reply: The Hadith of Aamash has become "bitter in my mouth" or something with a lot of doubts. Then

my father said: Abu Muaviah was confused in Ahadith other than from Aamash, he did not memorize them very well. And I heard my father saying: By Allah, he (Abu Muawiah) was Hafiz of Qur'an.

It is has also been reported that **Abu Muawia had lost his eyesight at the age of 40 or 80 years**. Yahya b. Mueen said that he had memorized 1600 Ahadith from Aamash but after his illness he forgot 400 out of them. He also reported that:

وروى أبو معاوية عن عبيد الله أحاديث منكرا

Abu Muawiah reported Munkar Ahadith from Ubaidullah.

Yaqoob ibn Shaiba said that Abu Muaviah occasionally resorted to Tadlees also. The report, therefore, loses its authenticity due to the incredibility of the reporters at the lowest legs of the chain. For further details please refer to '*Siar Alaam al-Nubalaa*' by Muhammad b. Ahmad Uthman al-Nabali Vol. 9, 2001. pages 74-76) cited by *islamweb.net*. The report attributed to Hisham b. Urwa had been narrated for the first time at Kufah in about 145 AH i.e. 87 years after the death of Sayyida Aishah and about 52 years after the death of Urwa b. Zubayr. Even if Ali bin Mus'hir a disciple of Aamash had heard it from Hisham b. Urwa in 145 AH, we find no good reasons for further concealment of the news for about 40 years after the death of Hisham b. Urwa. Reportedly, Ali b. Mus'hir publicised it during 185-189 AH. As such, **the report received its publicity long after the time it could be verified from any of the earliest reporters of the news**. Even otherwise, this extremely belated report remains a Khabar-e-Wahid because in any case, it ends in Sayyida Aishah through Urwa b. Zubair or others. Except for Kufah, the report did not exist anywhere in the Islamic world till the end of 2nd century AH.

The Ummah might not have paid any attention to these extremely belated reports provided the compilers of Sihah Khamsa i.e. *Sahih Bukhari*, *Sahi Muslim*, *Sunan Abu Dawuood*, *Sunan Ibn-e-Majah* and *Sunan Nisai* had not incorporated the same into their collections. By referring to

these collections as Islamic scriptures, therefore, the critics present them as an established truth. The Muhaddithin, however, did not expect that these reports of the events could be utilized retrospectively to insert a new Sunnah of the prophet ﷺ which had neither been known to the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and their followers nor they ever acted upon the same.

To support their version about tender age of Sayyida Aishah, the critics turn their backs to the fact that the Qur'an has repeatedly referred to بلوغ النكاح Bulooḡ al-Nikah as commonly accepted precondition to determine the age of marriage for both the genders in Islam. There as such, could be no possibility for the Holy Prophet ﷺ or his followers to consume their marriages before the Bulooḡ of their brides. Let us reiterate that we find no instance of any prophet of the Lord or the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ during the earliest generations of Islam to ever indulge into sex with the tender-aged females even under the pretext of marriage.

No one can be unaware of the fact that the enemies of Islam did not study the Qur'an or the Islamic literature to receive guidance or to appreciate wisdom and truth in it. They also willfully refrained from comparing the teachings of the Qur'an and conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with the contents of Torah and true teachings or conducts of the Prophets including John and Jesus. Their interest was limited only to search for precepts or events that could be exploited by them to paint a perverted picture of the characters of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or the teachings of Islam. Hence, besides ridiculing the teachings of Islam, they also tried to point out shortcomings in each and every aspect of the life of the Prophet ﷺ. Greediness for power and wealth, sensuality and increasing sex with age had, therefore, been the special aspects for their criticism. This also included the libel of paedophilia or child abuse against the Prophet ﷺ. They also pretend that paedophilia has been permitted in the Qur'an and it was practiced by Muhammad and his companions. We, however, observe that such aspersions are entirely baseless. We shall, therefore, be throwing light on different aspects of the issues to disprove the allegations against Islam and its proponents.

The supporters of the tradition about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah (ascribed to Hisham b. Urwa) fail to name any other companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to ratify the news. Even the Tabieen and Taba Tabieen up to 180-181 AH knew nothing about such Ahadith. To set the record right, therefore, we have been discussing the background suggesting fabrication and incredibility of the narratives about the age of Sayyida Aishah. These reports had either been unknown to the four greatest jurists of Islam or they had discarded the same as fake or incredible. Although a long narrative of the Hadith¹²¹ is found in the collection attributed to Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (164-241 AH) yet the jurisprudence prepared by him bears no impact of the said Hadith. Why didn't he rely on it has nowhere been explained. The net result is that the great jurists had either no news about this report or they did not find it credible. Similarly, overwhelming majority of the believers seems to have refused to accept it as faithfully reported news of the event. The fabricators had, however, ascribed the narratives to such nobilities that even the most reputed muhaddithin avoided to challenge their veracity. These authoritative names might have been the main consideration for the Muhadditheen to incorporate the Ahadith in their collections (compiled during 232-302 AH) along with the Isnad leaving scrutiny of these Ahadith to the succeeding generations. In spite of all this the reports about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah neither received popular acceptance from the masses nor had they any impact on the jurisprudence of Islam. Since the report had neither been relied nor acted upon by the Ummah, it may be taken as a defunct report of the events.

Reasons for rejection are also quite obvious. Non-existence of such a Sunnah among the Sahaba and the five earliest generations of the Muslim society and the extremely belated origin of the reports at Kufah instead of Medina, Makkah or Hijaz was enough to make the same incredible. Veracity of the Ahadith also stood impaired due to its non-compatibility with many verses of the Qur'an, Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ and over all spirit of Islam. In the forth-

¹²¹ *Musnad-e-Ahmad*, Ch. *Musnad Aisha*, Vol. 11, Hadith No. 26288.

coming discussion, therefore, we shall be narrating the background of the fabrications to depict their incompatibility with other Ahadith, jurisprudence, history of Islam and the Qur'anic guidance for Nikaah.

Jewish Perversion of Facts

Referring to the history of faith, we observe that the Jews had usually been behaving as stiff-necked people showing more concern about the primacy of their own race than unconditional submission to the commandments of the Lord. They inserted certain new phrases or verses in the Old Testament not only to assert their nobility and dominance over other nations but also to denigrate them. It was for the same reason that they refused to acknowledge the ancient prophets including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Ishmael and others simply because they were non-Israelites. The Old Testament, therefore, abounds in prophecies suggesting elimination of the rivals of Israel from the face of Earth. Even the Prophets among the Israelites had not been properly received by the masses of the Israelites. No doubt they obeyed them in the matters promising material gains and dominance of the Israelites yet they used to rebel against the Prophet and the Lord in all the affairs involving hardship and risks for them. Instead of mending their own behavior in such cases, the Israelites preferred to get rid of certain prophets by killing them. As regards others, their character assassination had been the excuse for disobeying them. They, therefore, openly rebelled against the Prophets and the Lord and tried to evade the commandments of the Lord that were distasteful to them. The Israelites used to spread calumnies against most of the prominent prophets like Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus Christ and others.¹²² Habitually, therefore, the Jews had been disobeying and denying the Prophets of the Lord by fallacious propagation of their wickedness than godliness. **As such, we find nothing new in the vilifications and fabrications sponsored by the Israelites and the Christian nations to tarnish the**

¹²² Rebuttal of the libels against the prophets can be found in our book '*The Israelites vs. Other Nations*'.

luminous image of the Holy Prophet ﷺ throughout the world.

It was the eagerness of the Israelites to prove themselves as the chosen and the only people of God that they refused other nations to share their God (YHWH) with them. They claimed themselves to be the greatest and the noblest nation on earth worshipping YHWH as the greatest but exclusive God of the Israelites as compared to the minor gods ascribed to other nations. This keenness of the Israelites to establish their prominence and superiority over other people in the world cost them to compromise the strict monotheism and universal domain of the Almighty. The ascription of minor gods for other nations, therefore, not only bulldozed the first three commandments in the Decalogue but also suggested the possibility of millions of rivals of YHWH. Subsequently, shift of priority from YHWH as the only Lord God to be worshiped by the Israelites to superiority of the race and material possessions of the Israelites prepared the ground for St. Paul to introduce the theology which was developed into Divine Trinity formed by God the Father, God the Jesus Christ and God the Holy Spirit. Insead of revelation from one and the only Lord God of the Universe, the believers in Trinity following St. Paul started receiving guidance from visions, omens, mystry religions and mythology of the Greeks and the Romans expressed under terminology of the Old Testament.

To undermine the Ishmaelites, the Israelites had to fabricate the allegation of slavery of Hagar the great great grandmother of the Arabs and the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Similarly, they depicted Ishmael as a disorderly child who had been declared Pariah and Cast Away from the family on the instigation of Sarah. According to the Bible he had been deserted along with his mother to die in the wilderness of Paran. The Israelites as such, tried to obliterate from the OT the truth that Ishmael had undoubtedly been the first-born son of Abraham who belonged to God. While doing so, they were intentionally corrupting the law of the Lord knowing full well that there had been no provision in the Torah to replace the firstborn with any other child even if the father hated the mother of the first born and loved some other. For ready reference,

therefore, we reproduce some contents from the discussion in part three of our book *'Who Was Sacrificed'*, in the following:

There is no law, tradition, or any other justification to deprive the first-born of his birth-right as stated clearly in the Bible. About inheritance of the first-born, it is said that:

"If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated: Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn: **But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.**" (Deu. 21:15-17 KJV)

It is, therefore, confirmed that the law of the lord does not allow that the first-born may be deprived of his birth-right at any cost. The Nuzi Laws in vogue at the time also substantiate the same as we read in the following:

A text from Nuzi explains how in certain marriage contracts a childless wife could be required to provide her husband with just such a substitute. Furthermore, if a child was subsequently born to the slave, **Nuzi law forbade the expulsion of the slave wife** – and perhaps this could explain why Abraham was so reluctant to send away Hagar and Ishmael (Gen. 21:9-13). Another way in which childless couples at Nuzi could ensure the continuation of their family line was by adopting a slave who would take the place of a son. (*An Introduction to the Bible*, by John Drane, page 44, Lion Publishing London, 1990)

Only the First-born are Dedicated to the Lord:

It has always been the unchanging law of God that the first born of all human beings and the animals belong to Him. In the Good News Bible, Chapter 13 of Exodus starts with the title "Dedication of The First Born" which is as under:

The Lord said to Moses, "Dedicate all the first-born males to me, for every first-born male Israelite and every first-born male animal belongs to me". (Ex. 1:1 GNB)

Further in the same chapter, we find verses as under:

Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine. (Ex. 13:2 KJV)

You must offer every first-born male to the Lord. Every

first-born male of your animals belongs to the Lord. (Ex. 13:12 GNB)

You must buy back every first-born male child of yours. (Ex. 13:13 GNB)

Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: **the firstborn of thy sons** shalt thou give unto me. (Ex. 22:29 KJV)

Other commandments about the first-born are quoted below:-

Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt **I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast**: mine shall they be: I am the LORD. (Num. 3:13 KJV)

For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself. (Num. 8:17 KJV)

The tradition of the sacrifice of the first-born persists since Adam and Abel. We, therefore, find that:-

Then Abel brought the first lamb born to one of his sheep, killed it, and gave the best parts of it as an offering. The Lord was pleased with Abel and his offering, but he rejected Cain and his offering. (Gen. 4:4 GNB)

We know that God is almighty, all-knowing and wise. He has no infirmity in Him. God, therefore, cannot be expected to revoke His own law or to give commandments conflicting with each other.

It is a historically established fact that Ishmael being the first born of Abraham belonged to God. Due to his dedication, therefore, Ishmael had to be separated from the family along with his mother during his suckling time to serve at the house of the Lord at Makkah. Torah has it that:

29. Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. **30.** Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me.¹²³

¹²³ Exo 22:29-30 KJV.

The afore-stated law, therefore, seems to be a derivative from the tradition of Abraham who had separated Ishmael during his suckling period along with his mother Hagar to present his firstborn son at Ka'aba being the only house of the Lord on Earth till then. The subsequent commandment of the Lord to sacrifice, therefore, pertained to no one except the first born son dedicated to the Almighty. The successors of Abraham and Ishmael, thereafter, kept the tradition alive at Makkah during four thousand years i.e. from the time of Abraham till today. This unbroken tradition at Makkah is the irrefutable evidence that the event pertained to Makkah and not to Jerusalem. **No one at Jerusalem ever sacrificed a single goat or an animal to commemorate the so called sacrifice of Isaac there.** It was only by corrupting the text of the Bible that the Israelites pretended to deprive Ishmael of the nobility and sanctification as the only son of Abraham offered for sacrifice at the house of the Lord. The insolence of the Israelites is, therefore, evident from the corruption they introduced in Torah to do for themselves which the Lord had not done for them. To update themselves with the Law of the Lord, the readers may have a fresh reading of the excerpts from our book '*Who Was Sacrificed*' reproduced above.

St. Paul, the self-claimed apostle of Jesus Christ went still further to disgrace the great great grandmother of the believers by contriving new reasons to pretend everlasting slavery of Hagar and her descendants. He argued that:

21. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? **22.** For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. **23.** But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. **24.** Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; **the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.** **25.** For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. **26.** But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. **27.** For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. **28.** Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. **29.** But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. **30.** Nevertheless what saith the

scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. **31.** So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.¹²⁴

The GNB has rendered verses 24 and 25 quoted above in the following words:

24. These things can be understood as a figure: the two women represent two covenants. The one whose children are born in slavery is Hagar, and she represents the covenant made at Mount Sinai. 25. Hagar, who stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia, is a figure of the present city of Jerusalem, in slavery with all its people.¹²⁵

By his own reasoning, therefore, St. Paul depicts Hagar as representing the covenant at Mt. Sinai. In his eagerness to debase Hagar and the Ishmaelites, he did not pause even to realize that **the covenant at Mt. Sinai (also specified as Mt. Horeb) had been the only, the true and the everlasting covenant of the Almighty with the Israelites.** Since the Israelites had broken the covenant by worshiping the Golden Calf, the Lord ordered them to leave Mt. Sinai. Subsequently, it was on the foot of the hills that the Almighty renewed the same covenant by granting the 2nd set of stone tablets to them.¹²⁶ In the Land of Moab, however, the Almighty made certain additions to the covenant made at Mt. Sinai.¹²⁷ The covenant at Moab was, therefore, a complement and renewal of the main covenant of the Lord at Mt. Sinai. As such, the Ishmaelites or the Muslims do not mind St. Paul's allegory to show Hagar representing the covenant at Mt. Sinai which had been the primary and the historical covenant of the Lord with the Israelites as His people freed from the yoke of the Egyptians. As regards the '*Jerusalem above*' and the birth of promise or spirit than flesh the same had never been accepted as a reality by the Israelites. **Jerusalem above, therefore, existed only in the imagination of St. Paul**

¹²⁴ Gal 4:21-31 KJV.

¹²⁵ Gal 4:21-31 GNB.

¹²⁶ Exodus, Ch. 34.

¹²⁷ Deuteronomy, Ch. 29.

that could not be verified by any tangible evidence on earth.

Actually, the Israelites had been suffering from the worst slavery under the Romans than they had suffered under the Egyptians. The ingenuity of St. Paul, however, interpreted the slavery under the Romans as freedom in the conceptual "Jerusalem which is above". No matter the conceptual "free Jerusalem above" cost the Israelites their independence, millions of lives and destruction of the city as well as the temple of the Lord. This had to be done simply because the world of spirit above could be built only after ruining Israel's world of flesh and blood on Earth. Romans, therefore, had to eliminate about 3/4th of the terrestrial Israelites to create a vaster space for the long awaited savior of mankind. Subjugation under the Romans was, therefore, described by St. Paul as the benediction to humankind by replacing the Old, senile and decrepit savior with the young and energetic son of God in Jesus Christ.

We also take strong exception to St. Paul's distortion that Hagar had bequeathed the whole generation of slaves to the Arabian deserts. To set the record right, therefore, we exposed the lies concocted by St. Paul in our book *Hagar the Princess* mentioned earlier. In the present context, however, it may suffice to rebut the filthy fabrications of the Jews and the so-called Christians like St. Paul by inviting their attention to the word of God surviving in the Genesis till today. God said to Abraham that:

And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.¹²⁸

The words of God quoted above confirm the royal status of Ishmael because **princes are born only to the kings**. The history of the world also endorses the same. The twelve sons of Ishmael and their successors had been ruling different parts of Arabia (consisting of about 1.25 million square miles) as chiefs of their tribes. As against this, the Jews enjoyed sovereignty and freedom only for three or four hundred years in certain parts of Palestine not exceeding 10400 square miles forming about 1/120th part

¹²⁸ Gen 17:20 KJV.

of the territories held by the Ishmaelites. During all other times up to 1948, they had been living under the heel of one or the other nations in the world. In the past history, therefore, the Jews could hardly claim any freedom from other nations.

The Jews not only refused to receive Jesus as the last warner/prophet sent by the Lord towards the Israelites but also went up to accusing his pious mother i.e. Mary having born an illicit child from a Roman soldier named Pandera or Panthera. Subsequently, the Christians themselves confused the virginity of Mary by suggesting four brothers and two sisters to Jesus Christ¹²⁹ perhaps through 90-years-old Joseph whom they ascribe as husband of Mary. Qur'an on the other hand always upheld the righteousness and piety of the Prophets and pious women of the ancient past. As regards the family and the birth of Jesus, we find a glorified description in the Qur'an starting from the concern of the mother of Mary to dedicate her child to the Lord in 3:35-37. It also contains an graceful narrative about the pregnancy of Mary and birth of Christ as a sign (miracle) and mercy from the Almighty (Al-Qur'an 3:42-51, 66:12, 21:91 and 19:16-36). As such, those who study the Qur'an in good faith cannot think of deprecating or maligning any of the Prophets of the Lord.

The people of book especially, the Jews and the Christians knew full well about the prophecy pertaining to the advent of the Promised Prophet ﷺ in the times to come. Had they believed in the words of Jacob, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist¹³⁰ and Jesus himself, they would find no grounds to deny advent of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Alas! In spite of observing fulfillment of all the signs of the Promised Prophet in Muhammad ﷺ, the Jews as well as the Christians chose to deny him on flimsy or self-concocted accusations. This insolence and refutation of the signs of the Lord earned them the titles such as المغضوب (those who incurred wrath) and الضالين (who had gone astray (from the Almighty)).¹³¹

¹²⁹ Mar 6:3-4.

¹³⁰ Mat 11:3.

¹³¹ Al-Qur'an 1:7.

The allegation about the age of Umm-al-Mumineen Ayshah as 9 years at the time of the consummation of her marriage can also be categorized among various disinformations spread primarily by the dissenters from the mainstream Islam during 2nd and 3rd centuries AH at Kufa and Basra highlighted subsequently, by the enemies of Islam including the writers in the West today.

Lesson from History

The 4th and 5th chapters of the first volume of our book '*Slavery and Human Rights through the Ages*' titled '*Persecution of Jews*' and '*Humankind under the Greeks and Romans*' throw light on the continuing struggle of the Israelites, to win freedom from their oppressors. We learn from their history that in spite of prolonged and unbearable torture on the Jews culminating in millions of their deaths did not succeed to wipe out the faith of the Israelites. Since even the most ruinous military attacks on the Israelites had failed to bring the desired results, therefore, the Romans had to change their strategy to achieve their goal. The Jews had been averse to bow before any king except the Lord. YHWH had been acknowledged as the only lawgiver and the King of the Israelites. To shake the foundations of their faith, therefore, St. Paul, came forward to suggest Jesus Christ as begotten son of the God and savior of mankind. Gradually, the concept took hold of the Syrian and the Palestinian masses and also the ruling priesthood and aristocracy of the Israelites. The division between the believers in the God of Moses and prophets before him vs. Jesus Christ as another God had, therefore, created such rupture among the followers of Moses that led not only to the loss of their independence but also their identity as a strictly monotheist nation in the world. Hence, it was about two thousand years later that with the help of the Christian nations in the West, they could reorganize themselves as Israel in Palestine which can be taken as restoration of temporal power of the race than revival of the faith of Moses (عليه السلام).

Although the missionary period of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had started from 609 AD yet the first 13/14 years were devoted entirely to preaching faith, teaching the book of the Lord and wisdom for character building and

sanctification of the believers. By that time the animosity of the polytheists and the Jews as well as the Christians flared up to the point that they started persecuting the believers severely. Even their migration to Medina did not provide them with relief and security from the attacks of the non-believers from Makkah and other tribes of Arabia. It was during this time that the Almighty granted the believers permission to fight against the wrong doers and miscreants (al-Qur'an 2:19-193, 4:74-76, 22:38-42) so that the mayhem may come to an end. Starting from the Battle of Badr in Ramadhan 2 AH, therefore, the Muslims had to continue their struggle to defend the Muslim community, to rescue the people from the tyrants and to expand the area under the influence of Islam. Towards the end of the caliphate of Sayyidina Uthman, the Muslim conquests had covered entire Arabia along with Palestine, Syria, Iraq and Egypt up to the present Aswan Dam and parts of Africa up to Tripoli in the West. Towards the North-East they had reached up to the Caspian Sea, Khwarzam, Herath and Makran. Consequently, the Eastern Roman Empire had been reduced to less than half of its former size while the entire Christian world was trembling under the fear of the Muslim invasions.

This was the moment when the Christian as well as the Jewish leaders came to realize that the Muslim expansion could not be brought to a halt just by military actions against them. For a strategic change, therefore, they decided to reapply the successful method adopted by St. Paul to strike at the foundations of the Jewish faith in monotheism, kingdom of God and imposition of the law of the Lord on earth. Abdullah b. Saba a Jew from Yemen had, therefore, been chosen as the spear-head to destroy Muslim unity of faith in Almighty Allah as the one and the only Lord God of the Universe. To obliterate the Muslim faith in the finality of the Prophet ﷺ and immutability of the Qur'an, he propagated the advent of other prophets after Muhammad ﷺ to continue his mission in the world. Such preachings, therefore, aimed at creating a permanent schism in the unanimity of Ummah to believe in one God, immutability of the Qur'an, finality of prophethood in Muhammad ﷺ perfection of the Law and Sunnah as the

everlasting and ideal pattern of life to be followed by the believers.

Abdullah bin Saba

Abdullah b. Saba from Yemen pretended to be a great lover of Sayyidina Ali and started instigating people of Egypt, Iraq and Damascus against the succession by the rightly guided caliphs like Sayyidina Abu Bakar and Umar (R.A). Sayyidina Uthman the 3rd Caliph of Islam had been the main target of Abdullah b. Saba which led to an everlasting feud among different sects of the Muslim Ummah. Consequently, the assassination of Sayyidina Uthman created such a rupture and turmoil in the Ummah that the Islamic world stood divided initially into Shiaan-e-Ali and Ahl-e-Sunnah Wal Jama'a and the Kharijiyyah but subsequently into numerous subsects which we need not enumerate here.

After the assassination of Sayyidina Uthman, Sayyidina Ali had been elected as the 4th rightly guided caliph of Islam at Medina. All the assassins of Sayyidina Uthman took protection of Ali (RA) by siding with him. Sayyida Aishah heard this news during her journey from Makkah to Medina after Hajj. Meanwhile, a large number of the Muslim community including prominent companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ like Talha and Zubayr started pressurizing Sayyidina Ali b. Abi Talib to take Qisas of Sayyidina Uthman from the assassins. On his reluctance to do so, they started doubting him and started assembling people to pressurize Sayyidina Ali for execution of the culprits or appropriate recompense to the inheritors of Sayyidina Uthman. After waiting for sometime many people at Medina started feeling themselves insecure at the hands of the assassins of Sayyidina Uthman who found it expedient to go to Makkah and gather around Sayyida Aishah to pressurize Sayyidina Ali to execute the culprits. Many people from Makkah and other places also joined them. Since Sayyidina Talha had large number of supporters at Basra, therefore, he led Sayyida Aishah and her companions to go there. Consequently, Sayyidina Ali also had to move to Basra primarily to resolve the issue. Initially, the negotiation for peaceful withdrawal had succeeded due to the efforts of certain wellwishers of the

Ummah from both sides but some mischief mongers and especially the companions of Abdullah b. Saba such as Hakeem b. Jabla launched a night attack on both sides forcing them to engage against each other unwillingly and without knowing the facts.

The battle ended in the defeat of the party led by Sayyida Aishah in the battle named Battle of the Camel in 36 AH. Since both sides had sound reasoning and justification for difference between them, the mainstream Muslims fail to decide who among them was more correct in his decision. After the end of the battle, Sayyidina Ali treated Sayyida Aishah with great respect and sent her back to Medina under military escort provided by him. Sayyida Aisha, thereafter, withdrew herself entirely from the political affairs and spent her remaining life in the service of Islam and wholehearted worship of the Lord.

Thousands of staunch believers in Islam from both sides were killed either on the field or as an aftermath of the battle. The most conspicuous participants on the side of Sayyida Aishah had been Talha (RA) and Zubair (RA) the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who had been promised paradise (*Sahih Tirmidhi*, Vol. 1, Book 46, Hadith 3747). On reaching the battle field, they came to realize the futility of the battle and the loss it could cause to the Ummah. They, therefore, retreated from the battle. Marwan b. Hakam, however, differed from the decision of Talha and Zubair. He, therefore, shot an arrow on Talha when he was returning to Medina. The arrow injured the leg of Talha seriously causing his death a few days later. Similarly, another miscreant i.e. Amar b. Jarmoos killed Zubair with his sword while he was offering his prayer. Although, Hakeem b. Jabla had been killed during his attack on the army led by Sayyida Aishah and Jang-e-Jamal too had ended near Basra yet it did not bring an end to the fitnah started by Abdullah b. Saba and Hakeem b. Jabla.¹³²

¹³² For detailed discussion about the events leading to assassination of Sayyidina Uthman, the Caliphate of Sayyidina Ali ibn Abi Talib and the mischievous role of Abdullah b. Saba and his companions, please refer to *Tareekh-e-Islam* (Urdu), by Moulvi Muhammad Akbar Shah Najeed Abadi, p. 396-504.

Muavia b. Abi Sufyan (RA) the governor of Damascus was a close relative of Hazrat Uthman. He, therefore, refused to pledge his obedience to Sayyadina Ali as the rightful successor of Uthman till Ali (RA) handed over the assassins of Uthman to Muavia. Sayyidina Ali, however, was of the opinion that Amir Muavia had no primacy of rights to judge the culprits as against the rightly guided successor of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He held that as governor of Damascus, Amir Muavia was obliged to pledge his obedience to the caliph of Islam at Medina than to refuse it on any grounds whatsoever. As such, according to Sayyidina Ali, the refusal of Amir Muavia to pledge his submission to the Caliph was a clear cut rebellion against the Caliph of Islam.

Finding no solution to the problem, both parties had to decide it on the battle field. Great armies i.e. about 120,000 from the side of Amir Muavia confronted with about 80,000 from the side of Sayyidina Ali. The armies assembled at the bank of river Euphrates near Raqqa, Syria in 37 AH. This battle of Siffeen cost the Muslim Ummah loss of great and valuable fighters of the time i.e. about 40,000 men from the side of Amir Muavia and about 25,000 from the side of Sayyidina Ali. As such, the tumult created by the subversive activities of Abdullah b. Saba had succeeded to decline the force and speed of the Muslim expansion in the world. The battle of Siffin, therefore, divided the Muslim community into three different groups i.e. (1) Shiaan-e-Ali (the companions of Ali), (2) Ahl-e-Sunnah wa-al-Jamaa and (3) the Kharjites.

Fabrications of Ahadith had been unknown to the Muslims prior to Abdullah b. Saba's conspiracies and misconduct. He and his party had initiated subversive propaganda against Sayyidina Uthman and the caliphs preceding him. This party forged letters of the caliph to create the distrust and rebellion against Sayyidina Uthman culminating in his assassination and an enduring split among the Muslim Ummah. The companions of Abdullah b. Saba and Hakeem b. Jabla had, thereafter, been responsible for fabricating various Ahadith to assert primacy of Sayyidina Ali over all other companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They also claimed that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had bequeathed his succession to Sayyidina Ali. Ahadith were fabricated to **depict Ali (RA) as another**

Lord God besides Almighty Allah. Following the stance of St. Paul, Abdullah b. Saba also had claimed himself to be a prophet of Sayyidina Ali. For years he continued to travel throughout the Islamic centres to destroy the unity of Islamic Ummah. Sayyidina Ali had always been disapproving the subversive activities of Abdullah b. Saba and the fabrications made by him. Taking him as first of the Ghulat, Sayyidina Ali had imprisoned him and gave him some time to repent. **On his refusal to do so, he killed him and burnt his corpse after his death.**

After the battle of Siffin, the Kharjites and the Mutazilites also started to fabricate Ahadith to serve their own cause. Although the earliest fabrications aimed merely at exaggerating the status and rights of Sayyidina Ali but soon they started inventing the narratives to undermine the Authority and integrity of Sayyida Aysha as a prominent interpreter of the Qur'an, authentic narrator of Ahadith and authority on Islamic jurisprudence. Besides this, the political animosity between the supporters of Ali ibn Abi Talib and the supporters of Muaviah bin abi Sufyan also motivated certain people to introduce fake Ahadith to support their parties. The wrong trend continued to prevail through out the Umayyad Dynasty ending in 132 AH. Fabricators during this period had to proceed with care and caution to accuse Sayyida Aishah, Sayyidina Umar and Abu Bakr during all this period. With the establishment of the Abbasid Caliphate, however, many of them started taking advantage of the changed conditions by forging the Ahadith to win favor with the Abbasid and Shiaan-e-Ali. It was during this period (in about 145 AH) that certain Shiites from Kufah publicized the Ahadith about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah attributing the same to Hisham b. Urwa and Urwa b. Zubayr from Sayyida Aishah herself. **None of the earlier scholars, traditionists or the jurists of great eminence knew anything about such Ahadith prior to their publicity at Kufah during 145-189 AH.**

As discussed earlier, the assassination of the 3rd Caliph Sayyidina Uthman had created a rift in the Ummah which became evident firstly in the battle of Camel (36 AH) fought between the supporters of Sayyidina Ali and the people assembled under the flag of Sayyida Aisha. Prominent companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ could be seen on

either of the sides, while some of them chose to stay away from the turmoil.

Eversince the said battle the Shiite supporters of Sayyidina Ali especially from Kufah had developed a grudge against Sayyida Aisha and they spared no occasion to accuse or victimize her on one account or the other. Some of them took advantage of the event of Ifk by inserting certain derogatory remarks against Sayyida Aishah in the original narrative of the incidence. Besides this, they also tried to pervert the narratives like barking dogs of Haw'Ab and some other Ahadith to disgrace and undermine not only the par excellence scholarship of Sayyida Aishah about the Qur'an and its interpretation but also her authority as one of the four Mukassireen (reporters of the largest number of Ahadith) among the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. To belittle the authority and credibility of Sayyida Aishah, they could find no better tool than to allege her as a child-like, careless and playful girl who hardly had any acumen to interpret the verses of the Qur'an, to narrate the Ahadith or to pass authoritative judgments on the matters of jurisprudence. It was towards this end that during the Abbasid caliphate, the Shiites faction of Kufah felt themselves free to fabricate new Ahadith or to insert various additional words or phrases into certain Ahadith to depict Sayyida Aishah just as a playful girl with shallow knowledge of the Qur'an, law and traditions of Islam. They were doing so perhaps to show childishness and immaturity of Sayyida Aishah due to which she chose to oppose Sayyidina Ali and his companions who according to them, was not only the rightful successor of the Holy Prophet ﷺ but also inerrant in all the decisions made by him.

ZAID, ZAYNAB AND THE HOLY PROPHET

ﷺ

William Muir, John J. Pool, Barnaby Rogerson and many other western scholars and orientalists criticized the marriages of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with special emphasis on his so-called child marriage with Sayyida Aishah and "love marriage" with Sayyida Zaynab bint Jahsh. To rebut their calumnies, therefore, we brought on record the background and the events necessitating the multiple marriages of the Prophet ﷺ during the expansionist phase of Islam i.e. 5-8 AH being the most strenuous and the busiest part of his life.

Let us reiterate here that the Prophet ﷺ of Islam had come not only to preach or transmit the law but also to perfect it and to implement it within the society. In the present chapter, therefore, we focus on the study of the reasons for the multiple marriages of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the marital reforms introduced through Islam. The Almighty had rehearsed his commandments about marital laws, inheritance and treatment with women in Surah Al-Nisa out of which, we are reproducing only verses 22-25 of the Surah as a reminder of the enduring law of the Lord since ancient times. God said:

22. And marry not women whom your fathers married,- except what is past: It was shameful and odious,- an abominable custom indeed. **23.** Prohibited to you (For marriage) are:- Your mothers, daughters, sisters; father's sisters, Mother's sisters; brother's daughters, sister's daughters; foster-mothers (Who gave you suck), foster-sisters; your wives' mothers; your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom ye have gone in, - no prohibition if ye have not gone in;- **(Those who have been) wives of your sons proceeding from your loins;** and two sisters in wedlock at one and the same time, except for what is past; for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. **24.** Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: Thus hath Allah ordained (Prohibitions) against you: Except for these, all others are lawful, provided ye seek (them in marriage) with gifts from

your property,- desiring chastity, not lust, seeing that ye derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed; but if, after a dower is prescribed, agree Mutually (to vary it), there is no blame on you, and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise. **25.** If any of you have not the means where with to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess: And Allah hath full knowledge about your faith. Ye are one from another: Wed them with the leave of their owners, and give them their dowers, according to what is reasonable: They should be chaste, not lustful, nor taking paramours: when they are taken in wedlock, if they fall into shame, their punishment is half that for free women. This (permission) is for those among you who fear sin; but it is better for you that ye practise self-restraint. And Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.¹³³

Although the verses quoted above covered most of the prohibitions about conjugal relations between the genders yet different communities in the world had adopted certain man-made traditions prohibiting various marriages which had never been forbidden by the Almighty. Some of the man-made prohibitions had become so deeprooted in different societies that could not be annulled just by declaring the same as lawful in Islam. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, needed to reform the same by practical demonstration of their abrogation through the examplars who could bear the brunt of the bitter criticism of the enemies of Islam. Ordinary believers could neither be expected to face the critics nor to create the desired impact in the society. It was, therefore, incumbent on the Holy Prophet ﷺ to act as an exemplar for the reforms or to involve his closest relatives and persons having greatest affiliations with him to implement the reforms that abrogated the traditions of Jahiliyyah. It was, therefore, for the benefit of the deprived and oppressed women throughout the world that the Prophet ﷺ himself had to come forward to nullify the stringent traditions exposing them to deprivation, destitution and helplessness. Besides his person he also had to involve Zaid bin Haritha his ex-slave and adopted son, his first cousin Zainab bint Jahsh and his close relative Maimoona bint al-Harith whom he married in order to remove the prohibition in certain

¹³³ Al-Qur'an 4:22-25 Yusuf Ali.

communities of the world to marry the sister of one's deceased wife. It also reformed the prohibition introduced by Roman Synod (402 AD) prohibiting the Christians to marry a deceased wife's sister.

Since the antagonists of Islam had been trying to disparage Islam by perverting different facts or by misinterpreting the revelations, we are attempting here to bring on record the actual background of the events and the impediments to be overcome by the Prophet ﷺ to abrogate the traditions of Jahiliyyah. For this, we start from the life account of Zaid bin Haritha in the following:

Zaid bin Haritha

Zaid bin Haritha had been born in the Kalb tribe living towards north of Makkah. His mother was from the Tay (طى) tribe. As such, both from the paternal as well as maternal sides, Zaid belonged to respectable and famous tribes of Arabia. It is said that Zaid was kidnapped as a child by the dacoits while his mother was traveling with him towards her parents. Slave traders, brought Zaid to Ukaz¹³⁴ near Makkah where Hakeem bin Hazaam, the Nephew of Khadijah-tul-Kubra purchased and presented him to his Aunt who, later on, gave him to her husband Muhammad ﷺ as a wedding gift. Zaid was about 8 years old when he was presented to Sayyida Khadijah.¹³⁵ He, therefore, grew up under the patronage of Sayyida Khadijah and the Holy Prophet ﷺ thereafter. On attaining maturity, the Prophet ﷺ and Khadijah used to send him to al-Sham i.e. present day Syria and Palestine etc. along with other traders of Makkah to sell their goods. During such a visit, some of his relatives recognized him and reported about him to his

¹³⁴ Ukaz was situated to the south-east of Makkah between al-Tai'f and Nakhlah. It was the most famous and important of all the annual fairs of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times. The fair was held in the month of Dhu'l-Ka'da, just before the start of the pilgrimage to Arafat at Makkah. The Suk (Bazaar) was strategically located in the middle of the spice route in the Western Arabia. (*Enc. Of Islam* by E.J. Brill, 1991, Leiden, Netherlands,) s.v. 'Ukaz'.

¹³⁵ *Azwaj e Mutahharat and Sahabat Encyclopedia*, p. 77.

father. According to another report, the uncle and father of Zaid had come across him during their visit to Makkah for Hajj. They, therefore, tried to negotiate the payment for his Manumission. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told them that Zaid was free to decide about his future. He could be released without any payment in case he wished to go with them.

Zaid, however, loved the Prophet ﷺ more than anyone else in the World. He preferred the Messenger of Allah ﷺ over his freedom, nativity, and his kith and kin. As such, he politely declined to go with his father and the relatives. His father and uncle, too, were satisfied with the response of Zaid. Zaid had, therefore, been the person who proved himself up to the highest mark of devotion prescribed for the believers in the Qur'an. The Almighty, however, revealed that blood relations supercede any other relations created by the word of mouth. God said:

The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers. Blood-relations among each other have closer personal ties, in the Decree of Allah. Than (the Brotherhood of) Believers and Muhajirs: nevertheless do ye what is just to your closest friends: such is the writing in the Decree (of Allah).¹³⁶

Keeping in view the love and devotion of Zaid, the Prophet ﷺ set him free and also adopted him as his son. He was, thereafter, known as Zaid bin Muhammad till it was revealed by the Lord that:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things.¹³⁷

After the said revelation, Zaid was no longer called as Zaid bin Muhammad but as Zaid bin Haritha. In spite of all this, he continued to enjoy **the distinction of being the only person among the believers who had been adopted by the Holy Prophet ﷺ as his son.**

¹³⁶ Al-Qur'an, 33:6 (Yusuf Ali).

¹³⁷ Al-Qur'an, 33:40 (Yusuf Ali).

Marriages of Zaid

According to the historians, Zaid married at least 6 times. Ignoring the chronological confusion in the said marriages, we may narrate that he married **Durra (Fakhtah bint Abi Lahab)** i.e. the first cousin of Muhammad ﷺ. The marriage had been dissolved perhaps due to Zaid's conversion to Islam. Zaid was then married to **Umm Aiman (i.e. Barakah bint Thalaba b. Amar)** an Abyssinian slave girl of Abdullah b. Abdul Mutlib who also had acted as 2nd mother of the Holy Prophet ﷺ after the death of Aamenah bint Wahab. She had been manumitted by the Prophet ﷺ after his marriage with Khadijah. She, however, continued to serve the Messenger of Allah ﷺ till her marriage with Zaid. Umm-e-Ayman had joined the battles of Uhud and Khayber. It was due to her dedication to the Lord that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had proclaimed her as a heavenly woman. Her first marriage had been arranged at Makkah with a Khazrajite named Ubaid bin Zaid. **This had, therefore, been a marriage between a free man and a slave woman.** She bore a son named Aiman to Ubaid. According to one tradition, Ubaid had divorced Umm Aiman due to her conversion to Islam. Some people say that Ubaid had died a natural death and Umm Aiman had become a widow.¹³⁸ Sometime after her Iddah, the Holy Prophet ﷺ married Umm Aiman to Zaid. She was a woman of dark complexion and much senior in age to Zaid. **She bore Osama to Zaid about 7 years before Hijra i.e. in about 615 AD.** According to another report he was born in about 612 AD which seems more credible because Usama was about 19-20 years at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in 632 AD. Allama Zahabi and Ibn Hajar have narrated that Umm Aiman died about 5 months after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. Some other writers believe that she lived much longer and died during the caliphate of Uthman (RA).¹³⁹

¹³⁸ Azwaj Mutahharat o Suhabiaat Encyclopedia, p. 378.

¹³⁹ Azwaj Mutahharat o Suhabiaat Encyclopedia, p. 378.

The historians also mention marriage of Zaid with Hind bint Al-Awwam, i.e. sister of Zubair b. Al-Awwam and a niece of Khadija-tul-Kubra. No further details are known about this marriage. Yet another wife of Zaid was Humayma bint Sayfi (Umm Mubashshir), who had been the widow of Al-Baraa ibn Maarur, a chief in Medina. Al-Baraa died in August or September 622, so the marriage of Humayma with Zaid might have occurred in or after 623 AD. In about 625 AD the Holy Prophet ﷺ married Zainab bint Jahsh his first cousin to Zaid. The marriage ended in divorce. Details about this marriage and its failure are being recorded in the forthcoming life account of Zaynab. Zaid had also been married to Umm Kulthum bint Uqba b. Abi Mueet, a maternal sister of Caliph Uthman. She bore him a son Zaid bin Zaid and a daughter named Ruqayya.¹⁴⁰ Marriage of Zaid with Umm-e-Kulthum had been arranged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Subsequently, she had been divorced by Zaid. Reformation of the marital laws with special emphasis on **establishment of a classless society** by eliminating discrimination between the slaves and the free people was perhaps the central consideration behind the marriages of Zaid, Zainab and Umm-e-Aiman etc. First of all, the Abyssinian slave woman Umm-e-Aiman had been married to Ubaid b. Zaid the Khazrajite who was a free person. It was after the death or divorce from Ubaid that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had married her to Zaid b. Haritha. Earlier to that Zaid b. Haritha the ex-slave of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been married to fakhta bint Abi Lahab i.e. the first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, Zaid's marriage with 1) Fakhta bint Abu Lahab, 2) Hind bint Awwam, 3) Humaima bint Sayfi, 4) Zainab bint Jahsh and 5) Umm-e-Kalthum bint Uqba belonging to Quraish or other respectable tribes of Arabia had successfully removed the prohibition of Jahiliyyah about the marriage of slaves or ex-slaves with free men or women. These marriages of Zaid had immense exemplary effects on Muslim society beause almost each of the afore-stated wives of Zaid had some close relation with the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Since then, the believers had always been marrying the slave women instead of keeping them as their concubines in the manner of Jahiliyyah. Usually, most of such women

¹⁴⁰ *Tabaqat Ibn-e-Saad*, (Urdu), Vol. 3, p. 211.

were given freedom before marriage. Alternately, any woman giving birth to a child used to win freedom for herself. All children from them had parity of rights with the children of regular wives of the Muslims. All slave women married by the believers would be considered lawfully free after their death.

Prominence of Zaid

Zaid had the privilege to be the first among the slaves to accept Islam. He also had been the only person to accompany the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his preaching mission to Ta'if (about 106 kms from Makkah). About a year before Hijrah, the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid had travelled on foot to Ta'if for preaching to Banu Thaqeef. The leaders of Banu Thaqeef such as Abd-ya-Lail, Masood and Habeeb not only dealt with the Holy Prophet contemptuously but they also instigated certain wicked boys to pelt stones on the Prophet ﷺ and Zaid causing serious injuries to them. Sometime later the animosity of the disbelievers at Makkah had increased to such an extent that they planned to take the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr, therefore, had to leave Makkah secretly leaving behind their families. They started their journey to Medina during the night hours. After settling at Medina, they found no one more trustworthy than Zaid and their slave Abu Rafay to bring along Sayyida Sawda, Sayyida Aysha and other members of the families of the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr to Medina. Along with Abdullah son of Abi Bakr, they brought to Medina the afore-stated families including the wives of the Prophet ﷺ.

While establishing the fraternity among the Muslims at Medina after Hijrah, Zaid had the honor to be **paired as brother with Hamza¹⁴¹, the illustrious uncle of the Prophet ﷺ**. It abolished the disparity among human beings on the basis of race, color or blood. The creation of

¹⁴¹ This was a great reform to equate an ex-slave with Hamza a great nobility among the Quraysh at Makkah.

the said brotherhood, therefore, fulfilled the commandment of the Lord quoted earlier.¹⁴²

The afore-stated marriages of Zaid and Umm-e-Aiman had demonstrated successfully that no one enjoyed any superiority over others on the basis of ancestry race, region, color or language etc. Due to Moral uprightness, firm faith, marvelous services and devotion of Zaid, the Prophet ﷺ ranked him with his prominent companions, such as Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali and Hamzah etc. Zaid, therefore, enjoyed social parity with all of them. By marrying him repeatedly to free women including Zaynab, the Prophet ﷺ had established the first classless society in the world.

While leading the expedition of al-Muraysi (5 AH), The Prophet ﷺ appointed Zaid as **governor of Medina**. Being one of the most famous archers among the companions of the Prophet, Zaid led military expeditions of al-Karada, al-Jumum, al-Is, At-Taraf, Wadi-al-Qura and Hism. Perhaps the most important assignment given to him was to command the battle of Mu'tah in 8 A.H. i.e. September 629 A.D. The expedition consisted of prominent companions of the Prophet ﷺ from Quraish, Ous, Khizrij and other tribes of Arabia. Notable among them were Ja'afar bin Abi Talib, Abdullah bin Rawaha, Thabit bin Arqam, Khalid bin Waleed and others, all fighting under the command of Zaid bin Haritha. Due to his appointment by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, the believers fought under the leadership of Zaid b. Haritha. The companions of the Prophet ﷺ had fully understood and prepared themselves to obey the Divine Commandment as per Al-Qur'an 49:13. They, as such, had full faith in the revelation that '**only those deserved greater honor with the LORD who excelled others in righteousness due to fear of Allah**'.

The response of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ to the appointment of Zaid as commander of the armies also demonstrates the unconditional surrender of the believers before the will of God as enjoined in the Qur'an.¹⁴³ Besides this, the believers also obeyed the instructions of the Prophet ﷺ as quoted below:

¹⁴² Al-Qur'an 49:13.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 33:36 (Yusuf Ali).

Narrated Anas: The Prophet said, "Listen and obey (your chief) even if an Ethiopian whose head is like a raisin were made your chief."¹⁴⁴

In addition to the direction of the Prophet ﷺ to obey, the leader appointed by the Prophet ﷺ or any of his successors, we find another narrative reporting that Salim the slave of Abu Hudhaifa had been leading the prayers at Usaba in Quba before the Prophet's migration to Medina:

Narrated Ibn 'Umar: When the earliest emigrants came to Al-'Usba a place in Quba', before the arrival of the Prophet-Salim, the slave of Abu Hudhaifa, who knew the Qur'an more than the others used to lead them in prayer.¹⁴⁵

All this affirms not only the parity of social status between the aristocrats and the slaves but also exhibits the prominence of those exceeding others in the knowledge of Qur'an and fear of the Lord.

Zaid died while fighting in the way of Allah in the battle of Mu'tah in September 629 C.E. The Prophet was extremely grieved to hear about his death. He, therefore, went to the family of Zaid to express his condolence to them. Zaid's daughter was weeping bitterly and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also started sobbing with her. Seeing this Sa'ad bin Ubadah asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ 'what is this'. **He answered this is the yearning of the lover for the beloved.** The prominence of Zaid is also evident from the fact that **he was the only one among the companions of Muhammad ﷺ who has been mentioned by name in the Qur'an.**¹⁴⁶ Muslims for all time to come will continue reciting the name of Zaid as part of the word of God. This, therefore, survives as the greatest commemoration of any human being other than a Prophet in the world.

¹⁴⁴ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 1, Book 11, Number 662:

¹⁴⁵ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 1, Book 11, Number 661.

¹⁴⁶ Al-Qur'an, 33:37.

Islamic Reforms through Zaid bin Haritha

Ziad was an archetype of the exuberant love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Divine teachings of Equality of status were imposed through him. Similarly, it was through him that the Islamic principle of obedience to the commander was demonstrated in various expeditions led by him including the Battle of Muthah.

It was also in Zaid that we find an ideal fulfillment of another commandment of the Lord as quoted below:

Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that ye have gained; the commerce in which ye fear a decline: or the dwellings in which ye delight – are dearer to you than Allah, or His Messenger, or the striving in His cause;- then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious.¹⁴⁷

Since the Holy Prophet ﷺ had adopted Zaid as his son, therefore, he used to be called Zaid son of Muhammad as per the prevailing traditions in Arabia. To abrogate the tradition of treating adopted sons as biological sons or other relations like brothers, sisters or mothers created through words of mouth, the Lord revealed that:

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَرْوَاجَكُمْ اللَّائِي تَظَاهَرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَاءَكُمْ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ ادْعُوهُمْ لِأَبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَإِن لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوا آبَاءَهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَمَوَالِيكُمْ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا أَخْطَأْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَكِن مَّا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا

Allah has not made for any man two hearts in his (one) body: nor has He made your wives whom ye divorce by Zihar your mothers: **nor has He made your adopted sons your sons. Such is (only) your (manner of) speech by your mouths.** But Allah tells (you) the Truth, and He shows the (right) Way. **Call them by (the names of) their fathers:** that is juster in the sight of Allah. But if ye know not their father's (names, call them) your Brothers in faith, or your maulas. But there is no blame on you if ye make a mistake therein: (what counts is) the intention of your hearts: and Allah is Oft-Returning,

¹⁴⁷ Al-Qur'an, 9:24 (Yusuf Ali).

Most Merciful.¹⁴⁸

Besides, annulment of all relations created through words of mouth, the verse quoted above also introduced a great reform in the law of divorce. Women could no longer be divorced by their husbands just by uttering that they were like their mothers. The Islamic term for such a declaration is *Zihar* which stands abrogated through this verse. For further details, please refer to the first volume of our book '*Islam as Emancipator of Women*', Chapter '*Women in Islam*', s.v '*Zihaar*' and also the books of Islamic jurisprudence.

It is worth noting here that with the exception of Umm-e-Aiman, Zaid had always been married either to the cousins of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or to women of Quraish or Khazrajites. This was done only to eliminate the concepts of some genetic inferiority of the slaves as against the social superiority of the famous tribes of Arabia. It was so because according to the verdict of the Almighty no one could claim superiority over others merely on the basis of his ancestry (Al-Qur'an 49:13).

It was due to the ancient Arabian concepts that Zainab's family had initially declined marriage of Zainab with Zaid. In spite of the fact that they had unconditionally surrendered to the will of the Almighty as per His commandment (Al-Qur'an 33:36) Zainab failed to reconcile her aristocratic background with the servile past of Zaid. The estrangement between them, therefore, ended in divorce of Zainab about a year after the marriage.

Although the divorce had been caused due to natural circumstances yet its ratification by the Holy Prophet ﷺ had abrogated the prohibition of divorce attributed to Jesus Christ (Mark 10:9-11).

Instead of providing any relief to Zainab the divorce had created new problems for her. Being divorcee of an ex-slave she had become ineligible for marriage with free men. Her chances of remarriage were also bleak because even Jesus Christ had set an embargo on the divorce and remarriage of the divorcees. He is reported having said:

¹⁴⁸ Al-Qur'an, 33:4-5 (Yusuf Ali).

11. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.
 12. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.¹⁴⁹

Zainab was suffering from the severe feeling of deprivation and disgrace. To reform the stringent law and to recompense and console Zainab the Almighty inspired the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry her. **This commandment for marriage with Zainab served as a permission for remarriage of all the divorcees in the world. The commandment was, therefore, a great benediction of the Almighty on the female gender for all times to come.**

Family of Zainab bint Jahsh

The Zaynab family consisted of Abu Ahmad, Ubaidullah and Abdullah, the sons and Zaynab, Habibah and Hamnah the daughters of Jahsh. **Abu Ahmad bin Jahash the brother of Barrah (Zaynab)** was a faithful Muslim and a venerated companion of the Prophet ﷺ. He was a blind poet who was well known for his linguistic excellence. Ahmad wrote an epic poem describing in detail the tortures inflicted by Quraish on the followers of the Prophet ﷺ. The poem exists as a masterpiece of classic Arabic literature till today. **Ubaidullah, another brother of Zaynab had married Umm Habibah, daughter of Abu Sufyaan** the most famous leader of Quraysh. Due to the persecution of the believers at Makkah, both husband and wife had migrated to Abyssinia where Ubaidullah became an apostate causing separation between him and his wife. Subsequently, Ubaidullah died in Abyssinia due to excessive drinking and other ailments. Umm Habibah and her daughter Habibah were, therefore, left in a helpless condition at Habsha. To save her from destitution and despondence, the Holy Prophet ﷺ married her and she joined him at Medina in 7 A.H.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Mark 10:11-12 KJV.

¹⁵⁰ For further details about Umm Habibah the Mother of the Believers, please refer to her life account in our chapter '*Wives of the Prophet*

ﷺ

Abdullah bin Jahsh another brother of Zaynab had been the most prominent member of the family. Entire Jahsh family including Zaynab had migrated to Medina under his leadership. He was extremely faithful and brave general who fought many battles to uphold the cause of Islam. He led successfully the Sariyah named Abdullah bin Jahsh in 2 A.H. i.e. a few months before the Battle of Badr. **As such, he had the unique distinction to be the first standard-bearer of Islam who was addressed as 'Ameer-ul-Momineen' by the believers under his command.** One of his ears was lost during the battle, due to which he received the surname '**Al Majda fi'Allah**' which means the one who lost his ear in the way of Allah. Abdullah also fought bravely in the battle of Badr. During the battle of Uhud in Shawwal, 3 A.H. (625 c.e.) one Abul Hakam bin Akhnas Saqafi injured him fatally with his sword. On his death, the pagans of Makkah brutally mutilated nose, ear, and other parts of his body. **Due to his extreme devotion and bravery, the Holy Prophet ﷺ honored him to share the grave at Uhud with Hamzah, the Leader of the Martyrs as well as the uncle of Muhammad ﷺ.** After the martyrdom of Abdullah bin Jahsh, there was no one to look after his widow **Zaynab bint Khuzaimah** and his son Muhammad. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, married Zaynab to provide shelter to the widow of his first cousin along with her son Muhammad. She, however, died after living with the prophet for about 3 to 8 months. Since Muhammad son of Abdullah bin Jahsh had been left as an orphan, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ purchased some property in Khyber to suffice for the sustenance of Muhammad.

Umm-ul-Mumineen Zainab bint Jahash

Her name was **Barrah bint Jahash bin Riyab** bin Yaamar bin Sabra bin Marrah bin Katheer bin Ghanam bin Widwan bin Asad bin **Khuzaimah**. As compared to this, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was son of Abdullah bin Abdul Mutlib bin Hashim bin Abd Manaf bin Qusai bin Kilab bin Murra bin Ka'b bin Lo'i bin Ghalib bin **Fahr (Quraish)** bin Malik bin

An-Nadir bin Kinana bin **Khuzaimah**. Khuzaimah was, therefore, the common ancestor of Barrah (Zaynab) as well as Muhammad ﷺ.

Zaynab's mother was Umaina bint Abdul Mutlib bin Hahsim. This means that from her mother side, Barrah was the grand daughter of Abdul-Mutlib who also was the grandfather of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. **Umaina, the mother of Barrah was the real sister of Abdullah, the father of Muhammad ﷺ and also the sister of Hamza and Abbas, the most illustrious followers and uncles of the Prophet ﷺ.** Similarly, Umaina was the real sister of Safiyah and Hamna the celebrated paternal aunts of the Prophet ﷺ who had died as distinguished supporters of Islam. Barrah, therefore, was not only the first cousin of Muhammad ﷺ but also related to him closely from many sides. **After marrying her, the Holy Prophet ﷺ changed her name from Barrah to Zaynab.**

Zaynab was born at Makkah about 34 years before Hijrah and she was about 21 years old at the time, the Prophet ﷺ received his first revelation at Cave Hira near Makkah to start his prophetic mission on earth. Since the brothers and sisters of Zaynab had been the first cousins of the Prophet ﷺ, therefore, it was due to his personal influence on them that they had been among the earliest converts to Islam.

Marriages of Zaynab bint Jahsh

It is said that the first marriage of Zaynab bint Jahsh had taken place about 18 or 19 years before Hijrah. The name of her first husband could not be preserved by the historians. Her husband died in 622 AD i.e. shortly before the Prophet's Hijrah to Medina.¹⁵¹ **After her migration to Medina with her brothers and sisters, Zaynab continued to live as a widow for about four years during which, the Holy Prophet ﷺ must have been visiting them again and again.** If the Prophet ﷺ had

¹⁵¹ Muhammad ibn Jarir Al-Tabari, *Tareekh-ur-Rusul wal Mulook*, Vol. 39. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 180.

any desire to marry her, both Zaynab and her family would have heartily agreed to the proposal.

In many communities of the world widows were mostly doomed to die on the pyre with their deceased husbands or to live a miserable and condemned life till their death. They used to be despised as ill-fated women. It was to abrogate such traditions that the Holy Prophet ﷺ decided to marry Zainab the widow to Zaid, the adopted son of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This marriage also aimed at annulment of the Arabian traditions that prohibited marriage between a free woman and a slave or an ex-slave. Unluckily the couple failed to develop amiable relations between them due to which Zaid, the manumitted slave of Muhammad divorced Zaynab in about 625 AD. Zainab had in fact surrendered unconditionally before the will of the Lord and the Prophet ﷺ. Keeping in view the background of Zaynab, therefore, the prophet's marriage with her can be taken as an accommodation of a near-relative in a helpless condition than any craving for sex or beauty of Zaynab at the age of 40 years.

Eventually it was after four years of her widowhood that the Holy Prophet ﷺ arranged her marriage with his ex-slave and adopted son Zaid son of Haritha to reform the traditions of Jahiliyyah that a slave or an ex-slave could not be married to a free woman.

After establishing brotherhood among the Muslims at Medina, the Prophet ﷺ had in mind to lay foundations for a classless society in the world. For this, he decided to create parity between the slaves or ex-slaves and the free people. This had to be implemented or demonstrated to fulfill the commandments of the Lord quoted below. God said:

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). **Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.** And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).¹⁵²

¹⁵² Al-Qur'an 49:13 (Yusuf Ali).

It was to her utter dismay that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had suggested her to marry Zaid whose servile past had no match with the nobility and aristocratic background of Zainab. In spite of being a devout Muslim and a great archer Zaid was a short statured stout man with flat nose and somewhat dark brown skin. He already had one or more wives. The proposal, therefore, was causing great shock and remorse to the Jahsh family who descended from Abdul-Muttalib from their maternal side. Besides the superbia of being a nobility of Al-Quraish, Zaynab also had the pride of being the first cousin of the Holy Prophet of Islam ﷺ. In view of all such considerations Zaynab and her family declined the proposal courteously. On this, the prophet reminded them of the commandment that:

It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path.¹⁵³

Zainab, therefore, called on the Prophet ﷺ and inquired 'do you choose him as a husband for me, O Messenger of Allah?', he said 'Yes'. On hearing this, Barrah set aside her scorn against the lower status of Zaid and agreed to obey the LORD and the Prophet ﷺ. She had perhaps realized that God was putting her to a test and refusing to obey the commandment of the Lord would be fatal for her.¹⁵⁴ God had pronounced that:

(Believers!) You will certainly be put to test in respect of your properties and lives, and you will certainly hear many hurtful things from those who were granted the Book before you and those who have associated others with Allah in His divinity. If you remain patient and God-fearing this indeed is a matter of great resolution.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Ibid, 33:36 (Yusuf Ali).

¹⁵⁴ Mark the difference between the followers of the holy Prophet ﷺ and the Israelites who had always been murmuring and complaining against the commandments of the Lord and the orders of Moses. Perhaps the most conspicuous examples of their refusals and insolence has been described in the OT (Ch. 13 & 14 of Numbers esp. note the punishment awarded to them in Num. 14:29-38).

¹⁵⁵ Al-Qur'an 3:186 (Maududi)

It must also be kept in mind that the meaning of Islam is self-surrender before the will of God. Zaynab and her family, therefore, unconditionally surrendered before the will of the Almighty. Had it not been for the purpose of creating a classless society of the believers, the Holy Prophet ﷺ would not have subjected Zaynab to the test referred to above.

The Divorce of Zaynab:

As stated earlier the marriage of Zainab with Zaid had been arranged to establish equality of social status between all the human beings on Earth. In spite of the fact that Zaynab had surrendered herself to the will of God, yet during her married life, she failed to reconcile her nobility and social status with that of Zaid. She could neither love Zaid nor could she pay respects as expected from a wife. Very often she used to boast of her lineage in his presence due to which Zaid found her a woman very hard to manage and to live with. The couple, therefore, continued to live with strained relations for more than a year but had no children during that period. Although the state of affairs had been causing depression and dejection to Zainab yet she did not complain against Zaid nor did she request the Holy Prophet ﷺ to dissolve the marriage. Bleak chances of reconciliation were, however, causing anxiety to the Prophet ﷺ as well as to Zaid.

In the ordinary circumstances, Zaid could have divorced Zainab without seeking permission from the Prophet ﷺ, but he hesitated to do so because this marriage had been arranged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself to established a classless society of the believers. This marriage aimed at removing disparities of higher or lower status on the basis of caste or ancestry of the people. The dissolution of the marriage could, therefore, be interpreted as failure of the reform introduced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ under guidance from the Almighty. This was the reason that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was reluctant to allow Zaid to divorce Zaynab and used to advise him to fear the Lord and to refrain from the dissolution of the marriage following a particular commandment of the Lord.

Actually Islam aims at harmony and peaceful living between the husband and wife. It's precepts, therefore,

imply that no unwilling partners may be forced to continue an unhappy married life forever. In case any one of the partners finds it extremely difficult to reconcile with his or her spouse, he or she can get the marriage dissolved without any stigma on any one of them. In spite of the fact that the Almighty hates the divorce yet He allowed it in very sparing circumstances to provide relief especially to the women oppressed by infidelity or misbehavior of their husbands. The dissolution of the unsuccessful marriage can, therefore, save the spouses from cheating each other. They can choose new partners with whom they hope to live in piety and happiness thereafter. In utter frustration, therefore, Zaid chose to utilize the Almighty's permission for divorce to his wife Zainab. The divorce of Zainab had, therefore, created an embarrassing situation for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Meanwhile, the Lord revealed to him that:

Behold! Thou didst say to one who had received the grace of Allah and thy favour: "Retain thou (in wedlock) thy wife, and fear Allah." But thou didst hide in thy heart that which Allah was about to make manifest: thou didst fear the people, but it is more fitting that thou shouldst fear Allah. Then when Zaid had dissolved (his marriage) with her, with the necessary (formality), We joined her in marriage to thee: **in order that (in future) there may be no difficulty to the Believers in (the matter of) marriage with the wives of their adopted sons**, when the latter have dissolved with the necessary (formality) (their marriage) with them. And Allah's command must be fulfilled.¹⁵⁶

This revelation left the Holy Prophet ﷺ with no option except to proceed as per commandment of the Lord without caring for the criticism or scandalization by the Munafiqoon and other enemies of Islam. This marriage, therefore, implemented the reforms as enumerated by us earlier s.v. '*Reforms through Prophet's Marriage with Zainab*'.

Prophet's Marriage with Zaynab

As per directions of the Almighty, the holy Prophet ﷺ married Barrah after her Iddah in Dhul-Qaada 5 AH (627

¹⁵⁶ Al-Qur'an 33:37 Yousuf Ali.

ce) and changed her name from Barrah to Zaynab. **She was then about 40 years old.** Besides abrogating many Arabian traditions pertaining to the Period of Ignorance i.e. inheritance, marriage, divorce, adoption as well as social status and dignity of women, the marriage of Zainab with Zaid, her divorce and remarriage with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had been instrumental to promulgate the Islamic reforms and law in the World as stated earlier. Maulana Maududi, therefore, comments that:

Up until then the Arabs used to consider their adopted children like their real children, who were, therefore, entitled to a share in inheritance, in turn, the adopted son's mother and his sister by adoption would also share the same close relationship they enjoyed with their real son and brother. As a result, it was not permissible for any adopted son to marry his sisters by adoption, or to marry the divorced or widowed wife of his father by adoption. Such a marriage was considered as outrageous as a person marrying his real sister or mother. (...) This Arab practice also deprived legitimate heirs of a part of their due share in inheritance and transferred it to those who were not entitled to any share at all. These practices also disallowed marriage between those men and women who were allowed by the Qur'an to marry. More importantly, these practices contributed to moral corruption which Islamic law sought to forestall. This because the artificial sanctity of ties based on adoption did not and could not have the sanctity characteristic of blood ties. When men and women who are joined in kinship by adoption freely mix with each other, moral lapses are likely to occur. Hence the dictates of Islamic law on marriage, divorce, inheritance and the sanctity of sexual relations required that **treating adopted kin as equivalent with blood kin be abolished once and for all.**

The practice of adoption, however, was too deeply entrenched to be scrapped simply by proclaiming that kinship by adoption was not the same as blood kinship. Ideas with deep roots in the past cannot be done away with simply by verbal declarations. Even if people recognized in principle that ties based on adoption do not have the same effect as blood ties, they would nevertheless have continued to be outraged by the idea that a mother by adoption and her adopted son could intermarry. The same applied to marriage between brother by adoption and his sister by adoption, between a father by adoption and his adopted daughter, and between a father-in-law by adoption and his daughter-in-law by

adoption. Moreover, there continued to be a degree of free mixing among people of the above-mentioned categories. It was necessary, therefore, that things be set right **and only the Prophet ﷺ could take an effective initiative in this regard**. For his action, carried out under God's directive, would leave no room for any doubt or reservation in any Muslim's mind. It was for these reasons that a little before the Ahzab Campaign God had suggested to the Prophet ﷺ that he marry Zaynab, the divorced wife of his adopted son, Zayd ibn Harithah. He complied with this during the siege of Banu Qurayzah.¹⁵⁷

Zaid had become beloved of the Prophet ﷺ due to his devotion to him and moral uprightness of his conduct. The Prophet ﷺ had adopted him as his son and the people used to call him Zaid bin Muhammad ﷺ. It had been an old tradition in the Arabs of the ignorance period to take the adopted sons just like the offspring from their own loins. The adopted sons, therefore, used to be treated as real sons claiming equality in the inheritance with other genuine successors of the deceased. **Although the step mothers were inherited and married in routine by the male heirs of the dead persons yet there existed a complete embargo on marrying the widow or divorcee of one's adopted son.** Islam, therefore, strongly prohibited marriage with the women who had been married by one's father. God said:

And marry not women whom your fathers married,- except what is past: It was shameful and odious,- an abominable custom indeed.¹⁵⁸

On this, Moulana Mowdudi comments that:

In Islamic Law, marrying women who fall in the prohibited degrees of marriage is a recognized criminal offence. According to traditions in Hadith collections of Abu Daud, Nasai, and Ahmad b. Hanbal, people guilty of this offence were punished by the Prophet ﷺ with death and confiscation of property. It appears from the traditions related by Ibn 'Abbas (found in the collection of Ibn Majah), that the Prophet ﷺ had

¹⁵⁷ *Towards Understanding the Qur'an*, Vol. IX, Syed Abul A'la Mawdudi, Eng. Tr. By Zafar Ishaq Ansari, p.15-16.

¹⁵⁸ Al-Qur'an 4:22 Yousuf Ali.

devised the following general rule: 'Kill whoever commits sexual intercourse with a woman forbidden to him' (Ibn Majah; 'Hudud', 13, 35; also Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, vol. 1, p. 300 – Ed.) There is some disagreement, however, among jurists on this question. Ahmad b. Hanbal is of the opinion that the convicted person should be put to death and his property confiscated. Abu Hanifah, Malik and Shafi are of the opinion that if a person commits sexual intercourse with a woman within the prohibited degrees he should be punished for adultery; and if he merely marries but has not actually had sexual intercourse – Ed.) he should be subjected to severe punishment.¹⁵⁹

The Arabs of Jahiliyyah could hardly think of violating their ancient tradition of treating adopted sons as the real sons. To remove embargo on the marriage of a person with the ex-wife of his adopted son was beneficial both for the men and women. **This marital reform, therefore, had great impact to emancipate the widows or the divorcees of the adopted brothers, sons or fathers of the people from all types of coercion, deprivation and persecution in any manner.**

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had already introduced another reform through his marriage with Sayyida Aishah that abrogated the tradition that adopted brothers could be taken as real brothers. In consequence of this reform, the adopted brothers, sisters, daughters and sons could not compete with the genuine inheritors in the property of the deceased.

Instead of interpreting the marriage of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with his 40 year old, short statured, infertile and helpless cousin who had already spent 23/24 of her married life. She had also been divorced by the ex-slave and adopted son of the Prophet ﷺ. It was, therefore, to console the earnest devotee of Islam than due to sensuousness of the Prophet ﷺ that he took her under his own protection. The Munafiqoon and the enemies of Islam are, however, free to follow their own misgivings in this respect. Their concoction about some sudden flash of

¹⁵⁹ *Towards Understanding the Qur'an*, Vol. II, Syed Abul A'la Mawdudi, Eng. Tr. By Zafar Ishaq Ansari, p.21-22.

beauty issuing forth from Zainab to captivate the Prophet ﷺ, therefore, has no impact on the people living under the concept of their accountability before the Lord.

It was on knocking the door that Zainab the wife of Zaid told the Prophet ﷺ that Zaid was not there. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, returned without entering the house but Zainab, reportedly, heard him murmuring that “**Glory be to Allah the Supreme, Glory be to Him who disposeth of men’s hearts**”. From this, the Munafiqoon forged the story of the fascination of the Holy Prophet ﷺ being struck by the beauty of Zainab whom he had been seeing continually from her birth to the time Zaid divorced her. The Munafiqoon, the non-believers and the mischief-mongers, however, follow their own concoctions to develop the juicy story that it was after the visit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that Zaid divorced Zainab only to facilitate him to marry her. We shall, therefore, be throwing further light on the issue in the following:

Fakery of the Story

Scholars rebuff the fiction suggesting fascination of the Prophet ﷺ due to some sudden flash of beauty radiating from Sayyida Zainab. The reports relied upon by them, however, lack credentials to establish the truth. This was the reasons that the compilers of *Sihah Sittah* did not include such narratives in their collections. It is, however, worth noting that the primary news in the history of Ibn-e-Saad¹⁶⁰ and Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri¹⁶¹ is based on the report of Muhammad bin Yahya bin Hibban an Ansari (47-121 AH).¹⁶² **Muhammad b. Yahya, therefore, must have gathered the narrative from certain other people who have not been mentioned by him.** Again there seems no possibility of Waqidi’s hearing the news directly from Muhammad b. Yahya because Waqidi (130-207 AH) was born about 9 years after the death of Muhammad b. Yahya.

¹⁶⁰ *Tabaqat Ibn Saad*, (Urdu), Vol. VIII, p. 135. Ibn-e-Saad (168-230 AH).

¹⁶¹ *Tareekh-e-Tabri*, (Urdu), Vol. II, p. 246.

¹⁶² *Mishkat Shareef* (Urdu), Vol. III, (Lahore: Maktaba Rahmania, Urdu Bazar), p. 408.

In spite of the fact that the narrative cannot be treated as a Hadith, its credibility needed the complete chain of reporters up to the eye witnesses of the event. Due to anonymity of the original reporters, therefore, it could be presumed that Muhammab b. Yahya b. Hibban might have heard about the event from some irresponsible people or Munafiqoon disguised among the true believers. As regards Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri, the scholars point out that he, used to bring on record almost everything he could gather from the market without proper scrutiny about the veracity of the reports. He never bothered himself to reconcile the conflicts. The writers, therefore, get utterly confused by self conflicting reports put together by him without any discussion or guidance to determine their veracity. To elucidate the point, it may suffice to quote the self-contradictory reports of Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri about the single incidence alleging that some woman had offered hundred camels to Abdullah the father of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in exchange for an immediate intercourse with her. We have, therefore, reproduced the extracts exactly from the English translation of the History of Ibn-e-Jareer without making any change except numbering them:

1.

'Abd al-Muttalib left, taking his son 'Abdallah by the hand. It is alleged that he passed by a woman of the Banu Asad called Umm Qattal bt. Nawfal b. Asad b. 'Abd al-Uzza, the sister of Waraqah b. Nawfal b. Asad; she was by the Kaabah. When she looked at his face she said, "Where are you going, 'Abdallah?" "With my father," he said. She said, "I have for you as many camels as were slaughtered for you, so sleep with me now." "My father is with me," he replied, "and I cannot oppose his wishes or leave him."

'Abd al-Muttalib took him away and brought him to Wahb b. 'Abd Manaf b. Zuhrah, who was the leading man of the Banu Zuhrah in age and eminence at that time, and the latter married him to (his daughter) Aminah bt. Wahb, who was then the most excellent woman in Quraysh as regards genealogy and status. Her mother was Barrah bt. 'Abd al-'Uzza b. "Uthman b. 'Abd al-Dar b. Qusayy, Barrah's mother was Umm Habib bt. Asad b. 'Abd al-'Uzza b. Qusayy, and Umm Habib's mother was Barrah bt. 'Awf b. 'Abid b. 'Awlj b. 'Adi b. Kali b. Lu'ayy.

It is alleged that he consummated his marriage to her there as soon as he married her, that he lay with her and that she conceived Muhammad; then he left her presence and came to the woman who had propositioned him, and said to her, "Why do you not make the same proposition to me today which you made to me yesterday?" She replied, "The light which was with you yesterday has left you, and I have no need of you today."

She had heard (about this) from her brother Waraqah b. Nawfal, who was a Christian and had studied the scriptures; he had discovered that a prophet from the descendants of Isma'il was to be (sent) to this people; this had been one of the purposes of his study.

2.

Ibn Humayd — Salamah — Muhammad b. Ishaq — his father, Ishaq b. Yasar: 'Abdallah paid a visit to a wife whom he had in addition to Aminah bt. Wahb b. 'Abd Manaf b. Zuhrah. He had been working in clay and traces of the clay were still on him, and when he invited her to lie with him she made him wait because of this. He went out, performed his ablutions, washed off the clay which was on him, and went to Aminah's quarters. He went in and lay with her, and she conceived Muhammad. Then he passed by this other woman and said, "Do you wish to lie with me?" "No," she replied. "When you passed by me before you had a white blaze between your eyes. You invited me to lie with you and I refused, so you went to Aminah and she has taken it away."

They allege that this wife of his used to relate that when he passed by her he had between his eyes something like the white blaze on a horse's forehead, that she invited him in the hope that he would lie with her, but that he refused and went in to Aminah bt. Wahb and lay with her, as a result of which she conceived the Messenger of God.

3.

Ali b. Harb al-Mawsill — Muhammad b. Umamah al-Qurashi — al-Zanji b. Khalid — Ibn Jurayj — Ata' — Ibn 'Abbas: When 'Abd al-Muttalib was taking 'Abdallah to marry him to Aminah, they passed by a female soothsayer from the tribe of Khath'am called Fatimah bt. Murr, a convert to Judaism from the people of Tabalah, who had read the scriptures and who saw light in his face. "Young man/" she said, "would you like to lie with me now, and I will give you a hundred camels?" He replied, As for unlawful relations, I would sooner die, and as for lawful marriage, there can be none, as I clearly recognize. So how can that be which you desire? Then he said, "I am with my father and I cannot leave him."

His father took him and married him to Aminah bt. Wahb b.

'Abd Manaf b. Zuhrah, and he stayed with her for three days. Then he left her, and when he passed by the Khath'ami woman he felt a desire to accept the proposition which she had made, and he asked her, "Would you like what you wanted before?" "Young man," she said, "I am not, by God, a woman of questionable morals. I saw light in your face and wished it to be within me, but God willed that He should place it where He wished. What did you do after you left me?" He said, "My father married me to Aminah bt. Wahb and I stayed with her for three days." Then Fatimah bt. Murr recited the following verses:

I saw a sign which shone
and gleamed in the black rainclouds.
I comprehended it as light which illuminated
what was around it like the full moon.
I hoped to have it as a source of pride which
I might take back with me,
but not everyone who strikes a flint produces fire.
By God, no other Zuhri woman has plundered
your person of that which Aminah has, and yet
she is unaware of it.

She also said:

Banu Hashim, Aminah has left (bearing something) from your brother, while there is a dispute over marriage, /ust as wicks leave the lamp behind when it goes out, having absorbed its oil. Not all the fortune which the young man inherits comes from resolve, nor does that which escapes him come from remissness. So if you desire something behave with restraint, for two grandfathers combined will ensure it for you. Either a hand with fingers clenched or else a hand with fingers outstretched will ensure it for you.

When Aminah conceived that which she conceived from him, she conceived an incomparable glory.

The readers can also observe several other contradictions in the passages quoted above. Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri has, however, openly confessed his shortcoming in this respect. The preface to his Book on History ends with the notation suggesting stuffing of his works with whatever he heard from various people without ascertaining reliability of the events or of the reporters. He says that:

This book of mine may (be found to) contain some information, mentioned by us on the authority of certain men of the past, which the reader may disapprove of and the listener may find detestable, because he can find nothing sound and no real meaning in it. In such cases, he should know that it is not our fault that such information comes to him, but the fault of someone who transmitted it to us. We have merely reported it as it was reported to us.¹⁶³

It is, therefore, evident from the above that the historians like Ibn-e-Jareer Tabri (224-310 AH) served mainly as collectors and reporters of all types of news without ascertaining the authenticity of the same. According to the observation of Allama Shibli Numani, **Tabri had narrated the tradition on the basis of Waqidi¹⁶⁴ whom he terms a great liar who used to fabricate instances that could support the transgressive indulgences of the Abbasids.**¹⁶⁵ Maulana Shibli's observations also find endorsement from the following:

A number of Islamic scholars accused al-Waqidi of fabricating or altering the reports within his works. Al-Shafi'i stated that "all the books of al-Waqidi are lies," while al-Albani, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and Al-Nasa'i also accused him of fabricating his sources. Al-Dhahabi and al-Daraqutni considered al-Waqidi's traditions to be weak. Al-Dhahabi's criticism focused on his methodology. He stated that while al-Waqidi was an "erudite scholar", he was deficient and insufficiently educated in hadith. According to al-Nawawi, this position was the consensus of Islamic scholars.¹⁶⁶

The eagerness of scholars like Waqidi and Tabri to enlarge volumes of their writings led them to include even the most incredible reports, they read or heard from the people. Tabri has inflated his historical book even by juxtaposition of contradictory reports e.g. he reports that Aisha was six years old at the time of her Nikah while after reaching Medina, the Holy Prophet ﷺ consumed her marriage when she was just 9 years old. Subsequently, referring to

¹⁶³ *History of Tabri*, Vol. I, Eng. tr. by Franz Rosenthal, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), p. 170-171.

¹⁶⁴ Muhammad bin Umar al-Waqidi (130-207 AH).

¹⁶⁵ Shibli Numani, *Seerat-ul-Nabi*, p. 444.

¹⁶⁶ *Wikipedia*, s.v. Waqidi.

Hisham b. Muhammad, he quotes that the marriage of Sayyida Aishah had been consumed 3 years before Hijrah to Medina when she was 9 years old.¹⁶⁷ The so-called great historian, therefore, leaves it to the readers to form their own opinion about the time and place of the consummation of the marriage of the mother of believers. Such self-contradictory reports and irresponsible attitude of scholars like Tabri and Waqidi has caused substantial distortion and inaccuracy in the history of Islam which had been exploited by the enemies to disparage it. The Brill's *Encyclopaedia of Islam* records that:

In medieval Christendom, the episode of Muhammad's infatuation with Zaynab and his compelling Zayd b. Haritha to divorce her, was made much of by anti-Muslim propagandists (cf. L. Marracci, *Prodromus ad refutationem Alcorani*, Padua 1691, 562; N. Daniel, *Islam and the West*, the making of an image, Edinburgh 1960, 31, 97-100, 292). Reacting to this, modern Muslim apologists and biographers of the Prophet have endeavoured to place it in a more favourable light (...).¹⁶⁸

Reforms through Prophet's marriage with Zainab

The Prophet's marriage with Zainab implemented many reforms including the following:

- 1)** The recognition of Zaid's divorce restored and revalidated the Law of Moses (عليه السلام) as per Deuteronomy (26:1-3).
- 2)** It also annulled the prohibition on divorce and remarriage as attributed to Jesus Christ (Mark 10:11-12) quoted above.
- 3)** Many societies in the world had imposed embargo on the cousin marriages because such marriages were considered incestuous by them. It is said that even at present, marriage between first cousins is banned in China and Taiwan, North Korea, South Korea and in less than half of the United States. Since the prohibition was not sanctioned

¹⁶⁷ Tareekh-e-Tabri (Urdu), Vol. II, p. 416.

¹⁶⁸ *Brill's Encyclopedia of Islam*. By E.J. Brill Vol. XI, (Leiden: the Netherlands, 1991), pg. 485, s.v. 'Zaynab BT. Djahsh'.

by the Lord, therefore, the Prophet's marriage with Zaynab his first cousin also demonstrated that there was nothing wrong in the marriage between the first cousins.

4) The Law of Moses (عليه السلام) had prohibited the priests to marry a divorcee or a widow. Sayyida Zainab had been widow as well as a divorcee. In the Leviticus we find:

He must be holy and must not disgrace my name. He offers food offerings to me, and he must be holy. A priest shall not marry a woman who has been a prostitute or a woman who is not a virgin or who is divorced; he is holy. The people must consider the priest holy, because he presents the food offerings to me. I am the LORD; I am holy and I make my people holy.¹⁶⁹

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had undoubtedly been the highest priest and the holiest person in the world. By marrying Zainab, therefore, he eliminated not only the concept of adultery attached to remarriage of a man or woman as per Mark 10:11-12 quoted above, but also the prohibition for the priests not to marry the divorcees and the widows. By doing so he removed the stigma of defilement or ill-fatedness from the divorcees as well as the widows.

¹⁶⁹ Lev 21:6-8 GNB.

SOURCES OF FAITH AND LAW

History of faith reveals that from the very beginning, the Almighty had created human beings with such attributes and qualities that were necessary to fulfill the requirements of their test and trial on Earth. It was for this purpose that the Lord God had created Adam and Eve (human species) with freedom from compulsion, bestowing on them the power to choose between the vice and virtue and to act in accordance with their own decisions. The Almighty had, however, taken on Him to provide guidance to the humankind through His prophets sent to various communities in the world. All these prophets had been members of the human community chosen by the Lord God to serve as His prophets long before their births (Al-Qur'an 3:81). These nobilities had grown up under the direct supervision of the Almighty who had been **keeping them under His constant observation** so that no one of them could ever violate or transgress the Law of the Lord on Earth (Al-Qur'an 72:26-27). It is, therefore, certain that **no Prophet could ever commit any violation of the Law of the Lord till his death**. As regards discretionary matters there could be some decision or act of the Prophets which could be falling short of the highest standard of morality. In all such cases, the Lord had warned them not to falter from the most exalted standard of ethos befitting the supreme conduct of the Prophets of the Lord. Numerous examples of the same can be found in the Bible as well as in the Qur'an.

All the true prophets of the Lord had been bestowed with rectitude even prior to the start of their missionary periods. In some cases, the Lord had granted rectitude to the Prophets even during their childhood.

(And it was said unto his son): O John! Hold fast the Scripture. And **we gave him wisdom when a child**.¹⁷⁰

We bestowed aforetime on Abraham his rectitude of conduct,

¹⁷⁰ Al-Qur'an 19:12 (Muhammad M. Pickthal).

and well were We acquainted with him.¹⁷¹

The prophets had the inspiration about the earlier revelations pertaining to the Law and the faith in the Lord. No prophet, therefore, differed from the essentials of faith and law preceding him. None of them amended the same without a direct commandment from the Almighty. **The faith and conduct of the earlier prophets had, therefore, been the foundation of the faith and the practice of the prophets following them.** The Lord revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that:

But when Our Clear Signs are rehearsed unto them, those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, Say: "Bring us a reading other than this, or change this," Say: **"It is not for me, of my own accord, to change it: I follow naught but what is revealed unto me:** if I were to disobey my Lord, I should myself fear the penalty of a Great Day (to come)."¹⁷²

In case of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the Almighty had assured the believers that:

2. But follow that which comes to thee by inspiration from thy Lord: for Allah is well acquainted with (all) that ye do. **3.** And put thy trust in Allah, and enough is Allah as a disposer of affairs.¹⁷³

There could be no possibility of any divergence from the guidance of the Lord by the Prophets:

2. Your Companion is neither astray nor being misled.
3. Nor does he say (ought) of (his own) Desire. **4.** It is no less than inspiration sent down to him:¹⁷⁴

God's assurance, therefore, leaves no room for the Prophets to follow their own impulses or wishes neglecting the guidance of the Lord. In case consummation of the Marriage with a girl of 9 lunar years suggested something

¹⁷¹ Al-Qur'an 21:51 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁷² Al-Qur'an 10:15 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁷³ Al-Qur'an 33:2-3 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁷⁴ Al-Qur'an 53:2-4 Yousuf Ali.

staining the luminous figure of the Prophet ﷺ, the Lord would not have left him free to do so (Al-Qur'an 72:27-28). As such after certification of the Lord quoted below, we cannot imagine of any action of the Holy Prophet ﷺ below the highest standard of morality throughout the world. God said:

3. Thou art indeed one of the apostles, 4. On a straight way.¹⁷⁵

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had the guidance that:

So set thy purpose (O Muhammad) for religion **as a man by nature upright** - the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He hath created man. **There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation.** That is the right religion, but most men know not.¹⁷⁶

Since, the puberty at the age of 9 lunar years is against the natural growth of the girls, therefore, we neither believe that Sayyida Aishah had reached the marriageable age at that time nor the Prophet ﷺ was likely to set an example of child marriage or child molestation. Hence instead of smearing the sublime attributes of the Holy Prophet ﷺ of Islam on the basis of the reports of a superannuated person suffering from blindness and psychosis, we should strongly reject the same. To update their knowledge, therefore, the readers may kindly go through the account of Hisham b. Urwa in our chapter titled "*Prominent Figures in the Chain of Narrators*".

The Lord also said:

Thus, have We made of you an Ummat justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ Al-Qur'an 36:3-4 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁷⁶ Al-Qur'an 30:30 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁷⁷ Al-Qur'an 2:143 Yousuf Ali.

This means that the almighty had made the Muslim community that keeps an equitable balance between extremes and is realistic in its appreciation of man's nature and his environments. Islam, therefore, conforms to the nature of man by avoiding all things conflicting with his nature. It has no sympathy with any of the abnormalities disturbing the balance of nature. Since the maturity of girls of 9 lunar years is against the normal observation of human beings in the world, therefore, we cannot believe in the narrative of people like Hisham b. Urwa that he disclosed for the first time at Kufah and Basra in 145-146 AH during the period of his blindness as well as loss of senses. Most rightly, this news did not exist anywhere in the world except in the heart of Hisham b. Urwa and **it could have been buried with him if he had died at Medina at the age of 84 years.**

Worship of Allah by Obeying the Prophets

The Qur'an tells us that most of the prophets had been teaching their followers that:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا

So fear Allah and obey me.

The same guidance has been repeated by many other messengers e.g. Al-Qur'an 3:50, 26:110, 126, 131, 144, 150, 163, 179, 43:63 and others. Adam had been the first human being to receive guidance from the Almighty to impart the faith in the Lord and human duties towards Him. While placing Adam on Earth, the Almighty had revealed to him that:

We said: "Get ye down all from here; and if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve."¹⁷⁸

Adam and Prophets among his descendants like Seth and Enoch had, therefore, been providing guidance to the People till the advent of Noah. According to the Bible, the

¹⁷⁸ Al-Qur'an 2:38 Yousuf Ali.

next most important prophet of the Lord had been Noah who can be taken as the first lawgiver, the segments of whose teachings can be found in various religious scriptures and writings extant today. Skipping over the history of the great prophets like Hud and Swaleh, we pause at Abraham. The Lord had mentioned Abraham among the followers of Noah. He said:

Verily among those who followed his Way was Abraham.¹⁷⁹

All the prophets of the Lord after Abraham had been from his descendants guided by the Lord to follow the faith and pattern of Abraham. Moses as one of the followers of Abraham had been the only lawgiver among the Israelites who preached strict monotheism to them. Thousands of prophets after him continued to rehearse and revive the teachings of faith and Law of Moses. Ultimately, John the Baptist and Jesus Christ happened to be the last warners from the Almighty to exhort the Israelites to repent from their sins and to turn to Him obediently for their salvation in the Hereafter. Both John and Jesus had short periods of 3 to 5 years each to call the people towards the Lord. They, however, did their best to fulfill the responsibility assigned to them by the Lord. This shows that conformity to the faith and conduct of the earlier prophets had been the acid test to determine the genuineness or fakery of any claimant of prophethood. **He who differs from the essentials of faith and the moral standards of the true prophets of the Lord preceding him cannot be accepted as a genuine prophet of the Lord.** Believers, too, had been directed to follow the faith and the pattern of their prophets. God said:

We sent not a messenger, but to be obeyed, in accordance with the will of Allah. (...) ¹⁸⁰

He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allah: (...) ¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Al-Qur'an 37:83 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁸⁰ Al-Qur'an 4:64 Yousuf Ali.

¹⁸¹ Al-Qur'an 4:80 Yousuf Ali.

Jesus as Follower of Moses

We find the Evangelists giving us the impression that, instead of a prophet and follower of Moses, Jesus was God son of God who by virtue of his divinity, was above the Law of the Lord. The tone of the narrative implies that Jesus could himself abrogate the law of the Lord revealed through Moses. Mathew, Mark and Luke quote him saying:

For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.¹⁸²

It means that Jesus was divine and above law. By virtue of his Divinity, he had the prerogative to disregard or to abrogate the law as per his own sweet will. We, however, observe that the quotation from Jesus given above is inconsistent with overall conduct and preachings of Jesus Christ. We shall, therefore, review the same in the following.

Jesus Christ was the last prophet of the Lord towards the Israelites. He spent his entire life as a follower of Moses and other prophets of the Israelites. Jesus never claimed to be a God or a law giver. He did not introduce a new law nor did he believe in abrogation of even a tittle from the Law of Moses. He declared emphatically that:

And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.¹⁸³

Mathew Goes into further detail to quote Jesus Christ:

17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. **18.** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. **19.** Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Mat 12:8, Mark 2:28, Luke 6:5 (KJV).

¹⁸³ Luk 16:17 (KJV).

¹⁸⁴ Mat 5:17-19 (KJV).

The Qur'ān, however, tells us that Jesus did not abrogate any part of the Torah. He only relaxed the laws which were not from the Lord or where the Israelites had themselves added unbearable restrictions to the law. All the prophets of Israel from Moses to Jesus Christ were the followers of Abraham. Prophet Muhammad, too, was enjoined to follow the pattern of Abraham.

Jesus of history was a Jew and died as a true follower of the law and faith of Moses and other prophets of Israel. As against him, the theology developed by St. Paul and his followers was more akin to the polytheistic creed of Hellenist society with a mix of mythology and paganism prevailing in and around the Roman World. The new theology was friendly to all the prevailing traditions and classical civilization of the Hellenists. It preached absolute subservience to the authority i.e. the Roman Emperors. Slaves were advised to obey their masters as they would obey the Christ. Since the majority of the populace consisted of slaves, the concept had a salutary gesture for the Romans. Except for the food or sacrifices made at the altars or offered to pagan gods, St. Paul did not prohibit any other thing.

The composers of the Gospels were Greek speaking citizens of Rome. While recording the facts about the life, preachings, and events leading to crucifixion of Jesus Christ, they had to keep in mind their limitations as subjects and citizens of Rome. They were not in a position to report the events displeasing the Romans or to propagate anything conflicting with the Greco-Roman culture prevailing in the Empire. The only secure way for them was to compromise over the truth and to interpret the events in the manner pleasing to the Romans. They, therefore, had to concoct apologies to cover the Roman atrocities against Jesus and the Jews. To uphold innocence of the Roman authorities, therefore, the Evangelists had to show reluctance or unwillingness of the Roman authorities to punish Jesus Christ. Entire blame for crucifying him was transferred to the Jews. Instead of depicting Jesus Christ as a prophet of Israel and a martyr fighting for liberation of the Jews to establish the kingdom of God on Earth, St. Paul and his followers presented him as a pacifist for Romans and an antagonist for the Jews. His theology was free from

any enforcement of the cleanliness of food, body or the apparel. The new faith relieved its followers from the unbearable burden of the laws of Moses. Salvation was assured just by confessing by mouth that Jesus Christ was son of God and Lord (God) who gave his life to expiate the sin of man.

The Law of Sabbath

The Jews trace out the origin of Sabbath in the Genesis as quoted below:

1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **2.** And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; **and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.** **3.** And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.¹⁸⁵

First of all we observe that the anthropomorphic description in the narrative quoted above is inconsistent with the unique and infinitely transcendent attributes of the Almighty. It depicts the Lord as a weary workman needing rest after his labor for six consecutive days. The Lord ceased His work on the 7th day to refresh himself. According to the Qur'ān, the Lord is free from all such defects. God says:

Allah! There is no god but He,-the Living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. **No slumber can seize Him nor sleep.** (...) His Throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and **He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them** for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory).¹⁸⁶

Glory to thy Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! (He is free) from what they ascribe (to Him)!¹⁸⁷

See they not that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth, and **never wearied with their creation**, is able to give life to the dead? Yea, verily He has power over all things.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ Gen 2:1-3 (KJV).

¹⁸⁶ Al-Qur'ān 2:255 (Yusuf Ali).

¹⁸⁷ Al-Qur'ān 37:180 (Yusuf Ali).

¹⁸⁸ Al-Qur'ān 46:33 (Yusuf Ali).

As such, linking Sabbath with God's rest day is abhorrent to the Muslims. The alternate view that Jews observe Sabbath in commemoration of deliverance from their slavery in Egypt seems more plausible.

Moses' Authorship of Genesis is no longer accepted by the Scholars in the West. Instead of a revelation, it is a mix of legend, lore and Babylonian mythology about origin of the universe. Genesis cannot, therefore, lend any support to prove the origin of Sabbath from the time of creation. Sabbath was not mandatory for prophets like Adam, Noah, Hud, Saleh and Abraham. The *Aid to Bible Understanding* endorses the same:

That the Sabbath was not enjoined upon any of God's servants until after the Exodus is evident from the testimony of Deuteronomy 5:2, 3 and Exodus 31:16, 17:

"It was not with our forefathers that Jehovah concluded this covenant, but with us." "The sons of Israel must keep the Sabbath . . . during their generations . . . Between me and the sons of Israel it is a sign to time indefinite."¹⁸⁹

We also observe that originally the Lord had enjoined¹⁹⁰ on the Israelites to keep the Sabbath as a holy day which must not be profaned by work. Those who violate the Sabbath were punishable with death.

Masses of the Israelites had always been rebellious against the commandments of the Lord. They continued to devise various means to obviate the ban. The Jewish priests and sages, therefore, had to add many clauses to the original commandment. **It is said that the list of prohibitions touched the figure of 39 by the time of Jesus.** The controversy over the activities permissible and forbidden could never be resolved by the Jews.

Strict injunctions for the same were made only for the Jews perhaps to punish them for their inequities such as detailed below. God revealed to the Holy Prophet that:

123. So We have taught thee the inspired (Message), "Follow

¹⁸⁹ *Aid to Bible Understanding*, (New York: Watchtower, Bible and Tract Society, 1971), p. 1425.

¹⁹⁰ Exo 31:13-16. See also Exo 34:21, 25:2, Lev 19:3 & 30, 23:3, 38.

the ways of Abraham the True in Faith, and he joined not gods with Allah." **124. The Sabbath was only made (strict) for those who disagreed (as to its observance);** But Allah will judge between them on the Day of Judgment, as to their differences.¹⁹¹

Unchanging Faith and Law of Moses

The Israelites had been stiff-necked people who always preferred to follow their own wishes than to surrender before the will of the Lord. To deviate from the commandments of the Almighty, they openly denied them or interpreted them in such manner that the commandments stood averted from them.

Moses had taken utmost care to leave an enduring record of the Decalogue and other essential teachings by inscribing the same on stone tablets and stone posts. Scribes had also been keeping the record of the same on leather sheets or other scrolls available to them. In spite of all this, the ingeniousness of the Jewish race interpreted the commandments of the Lord in such manner that YHWH became the greatest and the only God merely for the Israelites. **His Lordship was, however, denied to all nations other than Israel who were assigned other deities who were lesser gods as compared to YHWH.**

This wily interpretation of monotheism limited to the Israelites alone, therefore, opened the backdoor for multiplicity of gods on earth and throughout the universe.

In spite of the fact that both John and Jesus had been strict monotheists and they did not preach any other God of the universe than the Almighty, their apostles or disciples did not keep any written record of their teachings. Another important factor had been the Sadducees i.e. the ruling sect of the Israelites who had been chosen by the Roman authorities for priesthood including the high-priests. They usually preferred to conform to the Law and faith of the Roman rulers to secure their social status and personal possessions. Out of the remaining two sects i.e. the Pharisees and the Essenes, the latter consisted of the devotees to Yahweh and his law. Due to prolonging persecution by the Romans, they had to go underground to live in accordance with the faith and Law of Moses. John the

¹⁹¹ Al-Qur'ān 16:123-124 (Yusuf Ali).

Baptists had perhaps grown up among them and after attaining full youth started preaching people to repent of their sins and to turn to the Almighty earnestly begging forgiveness and salvation from Him. Almost a year or so after the appearance of John, Jesus Christ, too, started preaching repentance and turning to the Lord by observing the Law of Moses. His main adversaries had been the wealthier aristocracy of the Israelites and especially the Sadducees including ruling priesthood and the ruling class working under the authorities appointed by the Emperor of Rome. It was under the complicity of these dominant parties that hundreds of thousands of the strict followers of the Law of Moses and fighters for the freedom of the Israelites from the yoke of the foreign rulers were crushed or eliminated from the Holy Land. Other true believers in Jesus usually known as Ebionites had been those who had managed to live in exile in the Eastern countries away from the Roman sphere of influence.

Jesus, too, had been one of the most important victims of the said collusion between the Romans and the Sadducees which had attained a great success to eradicate the faith and Law of Moses. As such, the situation was ripe for people like St. Paul to preach new faith under the costumes of old religion. He and his followers utilized the name of Jesus Christ to introduce a faith friendly to the Roman Authorities and to the faith and culture of the Hellenist society. By utilizing highly developed terminology and infrastructure of the Jewish religion, they developed a new theology free from the stringent Law and monotheist teachings of Moses and the prophets. By introducing Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost as co-equal partners in the Trinity, they took sharp diversion from the highway of the prophets from Adam to Jesus Christ. **Jesus had neither claimed divinity for himself nor did he tell anybody to worship him instead of the Almighty.** He lived as a follower of Moses and continued to worship along with the Israelites in the temple till his death. Even after the crucifixion of Jesus, the followers, disciples and the apostles chosen by him continued to assemble in the temple at Jerusalem and they used to join the Israelites in their daily prayers and offerings till utter destruction of the city and the temple at Jerusalem with massacre of about one million

Jews at the hands of Roman General, Titus in 64 A.D. We already emphasized the fact that all the prophets from Adam to Moses had been strict monotheists and they continued to revive and rehearse the same essentials of faith to their people. Moses, too, had been preaching absolute oneness of the Lord God of the universe as is evident from the first three and the most important commandments of the Decalogue. It is also on record that:

And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: **for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.**¹⁹²

Subsequently, after staying with the Lord for forty days and and forty nights, Moses came back to the Israelites with the words of the covenant the Ten Commandments carved on the stone tablets.¹⁹³ Since the Israelites had already broken the covenant by violating its injunctions and the stone tablets had also been destroyed, the Lord God had again renewed the same covenant providing new set of the stone tablets containing the same commandments as originally given to Moses. Ultimately, after rehearsing the statutes of law and the essentials of faith to the Israelites for a long time Moses gave his departing message that:

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.¹⁹⁴

It is, therefore, evident from the above that none of the Israelites had the authority to eliminate any words of the law of the Lord nor could they add anything in the covenant made with Him. It is, therefore, strange to observe that a large number of the Israelites chose to diverge from revelations of the Lord through Moses and their prophets to believe in visions, logic, mythology and mystery preached by people like St. Paul and his followers. As such by attaining freedom from the words of the covenant of the Israelites with the Lord they enjoyed freedom to invent new

¹⁹² Exo 34:27 KJV.

¹⁹³ Exo 34:29.

¹⁹⁴ Deu 4:2 KJV.

theology which had the flexibility for changes from time to time.

It was due to the stubborn and offensive attitude of the Israelites that the Almighty decided to punish them by enjoining on them the stringent observance of Sabbath and strict dietary regulations. God said:

160 Because of the wrongdoing of the Jews We forbade them good things which were (before) made lawful unto them, and because of their much hindering from Allah's way, **161** And of their taking usury when they were forbidden it, and of their devouring people's wealth by false pretences, We have prepared for those of them who disbelieve a painful doom.¹⁹⁵

The Qur'ān also reveals that:

All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel Made unlawful for itself, before the Law (of Moses) was revealed. Say: "Bring ye the Law and study it, if ye be men of truth."¹⁹⁶

Comments of Maulana Mawdudi on the verse quoted above are reproduced below:

If Israel refers to the children of Israel, then it would mean that before the revelation of the Torah, they themselves had made certain things unlawful because these had been unlawful by custom. But if it refers to Jacob (and that is more probable), then it means that he did not eat certain things because he did not like them or abstained from them on account of some illness, but his children began to believe these to be unlawful. The subsequent verse shows that the law in the Bible which declared the camel and the hare etc., to be unlawful was not in the Torah, but was later on inserted in it by the Jewish scholars.¹⁹⁷

Had the Israelites surrendered themselves before the will of the Lord, there was no likelihood of any additional

¹⁹⁵ Al-Qur'ān 4:160-161 (Muhammad M. Pikthal).

¹⁹⁶ Al-Qur'ān 3:93 (Yusuf Ali).

¹⁹⁷ Syed Abul Ala Mawdudi, *The Meaning of the Qur'ān*, Vol. 1 (Lahore: Islamic Publication Limited), Commentary on Al-Qur'ān 3:93.

constraints on them. Jesus, therefore, relaxed only those restrictions which were either imposed by the Israelites themselves or they were enjoined on them due to the violations committed by them. As regards other law, he did not change a tittle from the same as quoted earlier. The Qur'ān also affirms the same. Jesus said:

(I have come to you), to attest the Law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was (Before) forbidden to you; I have come to you with a Sign from your Lord. So fear Allah, and obey me.¹⁹⁸

It was about 20 years after the death of Jesus Christ that St. Paul a Greek speaking citizen of Rome started developing and propagating a new faith in the name of Jesus. He had neither seen nor heard Jesus Christ during his life. Even so he became the self-proclaimed apostle of Jesus towards the gentiles on the basis of a vision experienced by him during his travel from Jerusalem to Damascus. St. Paul had been the only narrator of the incident and no one else had been named as witness to the vision. It was on the basis of the afore-stated vision that St. Paul claims to be an apostle of Jesus Christ toward the Gentiles.

Instead of following the faith of his master, St. Paul developed a new theology which was opposed not only to the faith of Moses and the prophets but also Jesus Christ himself. His preachings relaxed the Jewish concept of monotheism paving way towards Tri-Theism and even polytheism.

Faith and Law in the Melting Pot

Right from the time of Alexander the Great the Greco-Roman rulers had been following the policies of replacing the Jewish law, faith, language and the culture with the Greco-Roman language, creeds, culture and beliefs. During four centuries, since Alexander i.e. up to 64 AD they had achieved great success in the same. Old Testament in the original language of Moses could nowhere be traced in or around the Holy Land. Even the Jews had to depend on

¹⁹⁸ Al-Qur'ān 3:50 (Yusuf Ali).

Septuagint a koine Greek¹⁹⁹ translation of the books of Moses. Since the original language, phrases and words of the revelation had been lost irretrievably, therefore, it had become impossible even for the faithful believers to compare their faith and law with the original sources. People like St. Paul enjoyed a free hand to preach their own convictions on the basis of Greek logic, mythology and pagan cults to conform to the Greco-Roman culture within the Empire. Since most of the pagan sources in the Empire had been using cross as the symbol of the Sun God, therefore, its adoption by the Christianity was helpful to create amalgamation between the pagan faiths and Christianity. Instead of the observation of stringent dietary regulations and laws of cleanliness introduced by Moses, St. Paul declared everything lawful for himself. He says:

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient:
all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.²⁰⁰

Earlier to that St. Paul had said that:

As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.²⁰¹

Following him, the evangelists too had introduced a trance or vision of St. Peter during his journey towards Cornelious a Roman centurian at Caesarea. It has been reported about peter that:

11. And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four

¹⁹⁹ Koine Greek was the common language of the Eastern Mediterranean, the language of education in the Roman Empire and the language of Christians in the New Testament. Cross till then had the negative connotation of the horrific public execution of the criminals. Chi-rho was the earlier representation of the crucifixion till the time of Emperor Constantine the Great. This shows that the cross had not become a part of Christian iconography or symbol until the first quarter of the fourth century AD. However, **the crucifix itself with the dead Jesus on the cross did not appear until the 6th century.**

²⁰⁰ 1Co 10:23 KJV.

²⁰¹ 1Co 8:4 KJV.

corners, and let down to the earth: **12.** Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. **13.** And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.²⁰²

Such visions, thereafter, became a routine matter among the Christians of all ages since St. Peter and Paul. The Church had been making good use of the same to make the desired changes in the faith, law and preachings of Jesus Christ to accord with the requirements of the time. No one can, therefore, enumerate the visions and trances experienced by the believers in Christianity or even the pagan nobilities to incorporate the same as part of the primary faith of Christianity. It was in about 312 AD during the battle of Milvian Bridge that Constantine the pagan contestant for empire and his army saw a great cross in the sky. Underneath was written, **"In this sign, conquer."** The success of Constantine in the Battle not only affirmed his emperorship of Rome but also accorded divinity to the Cross the 'sun god' worshiped by many nations in Europe Africa and Asia. Hitherto the Romans had been displaying the cross as a symbol of their supremacy and a sign of terror and torture for the rebels. The cross purposely depicted painful and gruesome method of execution of the rebels. Firstly it was the ingeniousness of St. Paul to present and interpret the sign of cross as a symbol of consecration and the Lord's sign of salvation. Although the Romans had crucified Jesus as an insurrectionist against Rome and they subjected him to death through the most hateful sign of torture yet St. Paul interpreted his death as atonement from the original sin of those who confessed him the God who had given his life to expiate their sins. **Cross had originally been the symbol of God Tammuz of Chaldea the Babylonian Sun God which through preachings of St. Paul gradually became idolized as an Icon worshiped by many of the Christians.** In spite of this, the crucifix on which image of christe is present is not known to have been used until the 6th century AD.

It was in about 325 AD that the same pagan emperor had presided the First Council of Nicaea in Anatolia which affirmed Trinity instead of monotheism and introduced many other precepts of faith most of which survive till

²⁰² Act 10:11-13 KJV.

today. The fact remains that from the very beginning the so-called followers of Jesus Christ never cared for preservation of the articles of faith preached by him. According to the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, the term '**articles of faith**' was unknown in the age of fathers though it came into use before the time of St. Thomas Aquinas 1225-1274 AD. Thus in spite of being the building blocks of theology, **the Christians had no articles of faith for about 1200 years after the death of Jesus Christ**. It was perhaps during the Middle Ages that they carved out eight articles of faith none of which was based on some revelation attributed to Jesus Christ. The field, therefore, remained open till today when we find 24 articles of faith of the Baptist Church alone. This shows that the Christian faith and practice had always been open to changes to accord with the necessities of the time.

Eversince the First Council of Niceaea, the Roman Catholic Church had been arranging many other councils from time to time to amend the law or introduce some new faith. As such **the Christian religion is likely to remain in the melting pot for all times to come**. We cannot, therefore, foresee the end of the visionary process of the Christians to make way for new faiths and law. One of the most conspicuous examples is that of Joseph Smith the founder of Mormonism during the first part of the 19th century AD just on the basis of certain visions seen by him. In spite of just 38 years to live on earth, **Joseph Smith** (1805-1844 AD) **married 34 women** while his successor **Brigham Young** (1801-1877 AD) **married a total of 65 women**. As such, the gentlemen mentioned above not only brought an end to the supremacy of the New Testament among the Christians but also demolished the Christian concepts of monogamy and celibacy effectively.

The Christians attribute to Jesus Christ having said:

And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.²⁰³

²⁰³ Mat 19:9 KJV. See also Luke 16:18, & Mark 10:11-12.

In this respect, we observe that the law that cannot be acted upon by overwhelming majority of the people must be abrogated as a bad law. As such, large number of violations of this law in USA and other Western Countries proves it as a bad law. Similarly, the Christian West has adopted wide-spread practice of remarrying the divorced women. This proves the redundancy of the law banning the remarriage of divorced persons. Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln had observed that:

"I am unable to accept the conclusions of those who make marriage absolutely indissoluble, and so forbid the remarriage of those who have been separated, under any circumstances."²⁰⁴

It is said that a bad law makes hard cases. No law as such can be considered good as long as it cannot be worked upon by majority of the People. When majority of the people find it impossible to abide by a certain law, it may be taken as a bad law which needs to be amended as soon as possible. The Lord, therefore, did not enjoin any law which forced people to wage a war against the nature of their creation. Divorce and remarriage become necessities of certain individuals and a good law must make provisions for the same. In case the human beings do not find the legal way to fulfill their utter necessities, they resort to violate the same secretly or openly as the case may be. In spite of the fact that there is no provision for divorce for the chaste men or women in the Christianity, we observe that about 50 percent of the marriages in USA in about 1990 ended in divorce. It has also been reported that: *Divorce is on the decline and has been since the 1980s in America (when that 50% divorce statistic took hold). Experts now put your chances of uncoupling at about 39% in the U.S. This sounds like such promising news*²⁰⁵. Another source reports that:

However, about 40 to 50 percent of married couples in the United States divorce. The divorce rate for subsequent

²⁰⁴ *Marriage Divorce and the Church* (London, SPCK 1972), p. 6.

²⁰⁵ *Time.com*, by BELINDA LUSCOMBE, published: NOVEMBER 26, 2018.

marriages is even higher.²⁰⁶

It was perhaps to forestall any such attempts by the Muslim visionaries or the saints that the Almighty had certified perfection of the religion of the Lord with his appreciation of the proper implementation of law and conduct of the followers of the prophet in the Qur'an (3:110 and 5:3). As such, all the so-called good things that cannot be traced out among the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ cannot be given a religious form by their followers.

New Theology Based on Visions, Logic & Greek Myths

Since Jesus had been crucified by the Romans with the assistance of the Jewish aristocracy and high priesthood, therefore, his untimely death did not allow him to give a final form to his teachings. The ultimate result has been that the Christian religion always remained at the mercy of the Christian fathers/Church. It, therefore, contains everything which could not have existed in the law and faith of Moses and the prophets following him.

All the revealed religions from Adam to Jesus Christ had been based entirely on the revelations of the Lord received through His true prophets. After the death of Jesus, however, the religion revealed to Jesus and all other prophets up to Moses stood converted from the revelation to the Catholic creed prevailing in the Greco-Roman Empire. Instead of attaching primacy to the words revealed by the Almighty, the followers of St. Paul started preferring the logic and arguments of St. Paul and polytheistic creeds based on mystery and mythology cultures prevailing around the Mediterranean Sea. The new religion covered by the costumes and the terminology of the religion revealed to Moses replaced Monotheism with Tritheism and works under the law with mysterious spirituality the veracity of which was neither visible to the human eye nor could the

²⁰⁶ 2019 *American Psychological Association*, (750 First St. NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242), s.v. *Marriage and Divorce*

same be put to a test in any laboratory in the world. The Almighty, therefore, addressed the followers of the wrong teachings as ضالين (those who had gone astray). This was, therefore, the appropriate time for the advent of the Promised Prophet ﷺ to rehearse and revive the true religion revealed by the Lord.

Islamic Law and Faith Stood Perfected Before the Death of the Prophet ﷺ.

Muslims believe in the Qur'an as the final message of guidance from the Almighty who had guaranteed immutability or any corruption in the text of the Qur'an (15:9). It, therefore, endures in its pristine purity as the main source of guidance for the believers. The book is free from all types of doubts or contradictions in it. Besides this the Holy Prophet also had the inspiration about the teachings of the Prophets before him.

It has already been pointed out that all the prophets had usually continued to follow the traditions of the messengers of the Lord preceding them till they received some new commandment for a change therein. In Surah al-Anaam, after mentioning the names of many great prophets, the Almighty directed the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the following manner:

82. "It is those who believe and confuse not their beliefs with wrong - that are (truly) In security, for **They are on (right) Guidance.**" **83.** that was the reasoning about us, which we gave to Abraham (to use) against His people: we raise whom we will, degree after degree: for Thy Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge. **84.** we gave Him Isaac and Jacob: all (three) guided: and before him, we guided Noah, and among His progeny, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron: Thus do we reward those who do good: **85.** and Zakariya and John, and Jesus and Elias: **all In the ranks of the righteous: 86.** and Isma'il and Elisha, and Jonas, and Lot: and to all we gave favour above the nations: **87.** (to them) and to their fathers, and progeny and brethren: we chose them, and **we guided them to a straight way. 88.** This is the guidance of Allah. He giveth that guidance to whom He pleaseth, of His worshippers. if They were to join other gods with him, all that They did would be vain for them. **89.** These were the men to whom we gave the Book, and authority, and

prophethood: if these (Their descendants) reject them, Behold! we shall entrust their charge to a new people who reject them not.²⁰⁷

Those were the (prophets) who received Allah's guidance: **Copy the guidance they received**; Say: "No reward for this do I ask of you: This is no less than a message for the nations."²⁰⁸

As for the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his followers, it was revealed by the Almighty that:

The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah - the which We have sent by inspiration to thee - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions there in: to those who worship other things than Allah, hard is the (way) to which thou callest them. Allah chooses to Himself those whom He pleases, and guides to Himself those who turn (to Him).²⁰⁹

In Surah *Saffaat*, after revealing about the delivery of Prophet Noah from the Deluge, the Almighty also divulged that:

Verily among those who followed his Way was Abraham.²¹⁰

The Holy Prophet ﷺ was further directed that:

There is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Abraham and those with him.²¹¹

It was, therefore, binding upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to follow the faith, the traditions and the pattern of earlier prophets and especially that of Abraham and Noah without any change in the essentials of guidance from the Almighty. **Since we find no example of**

²⁰⁷ Al-Qur'an 6:82-89 Yousuf Ali.

²⁰⁸ Al-Qur'an 6:90 Yousuf Ali.

²⁰⁹ Al-Qur'an 42:13 Yousuf Ali.

²¹⁰ Al-Qur'an 37:83 Yousuf Ali.

²¹¹ Al-Qur'an 60:4 Yousuf Ali.

consummation of child marriage from Adam to Noah or Abraham and even 2500 years thereafter till the time of Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, therefore, we cannot ascribe to him the oddity of consuming the marriage of Sayyida Aysa when she was just 9 years old. Since none of the earlier prophets had consumed his marriage with a girl of 9 lunar years, therefore, it was unthinkable for the Prophet ﷺ to violate their tradition without specific guidance from the Almighty. In case of Sayyida Aishah, we find no guidance from the Lord in the Qur'an allowing consummation of marriage before her Bulooḡh. In view of the above the **unduly belated report conflicting with the precepts of the Qur'an and traditions of all the prophets of the Lord must be rejected outrightly by the believers.**

The Holy Prophet ﷺ served as the best exemplar of the most exalted moral excellence and rectitude to be imitated by His followers. The verbal preachings and Sunnah i.e. the practical example of the routine of the Prophet ﷺ comes next to the Qur'an. The Almighty had instructed the Holy Prophet ﷺ that:

O Messenger! proclaim the (message) which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. **If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. And Allah will defend thee from men (who mean mischief).** For Allah guideth not those who reject Faith.²¹²

We, therefore, believe that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had transmitted each and every message of the Lord to his followers. The Lord, too, had watched over proclamation of His entire message to the followers. No lassitude or negligence can, therefore, be ascribed to the Prophet ﷺ especially when the Lord himself had certified completion of faith and guidance. God said:

(...) This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion (...).²¹³

²¹² Al-Qur'an 5:67 Yousuf Ali.

²¹³ Al-Qur'an 5:3 Yousuf Ali.

As such, there could be no room for the assumption that the Prophet ﷺ might have failed to proclaim any of the divine messages to his followers. The next assumption could be the non-adoption or turning away of the Sahaba from the beautiful pattern of the life of the Prophet ﷺ. All such possibilities stand ruled out with the certification of the Lord in the following. God said:

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors.²¹⁴

It is pertinent to note here that Marriage with the virgins had been the most widely prevailing tradition in the world. Even about 95% of the Muslims had usually been marrying the virgins. The Prophet's marriage with Sayyida Aishah (a virgin) was, therefore, likely to endure **as the most applicable Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to be imitated by his followers**. Now if the Holy Prophet ﷺ had set an example of consuming his marriage with a girl of 9 lunar years, it would have been the most prevailing practice in the Muslim Ummah. As against this, we find no trace of such a tradition not only among the Sahaba but about four earliest generations of Muslims thereafter. As such, the total non-existence of such a Sunnah among the earliest Muslim community impairs credibility of the Hadith seriously. We, therefore, have no option except to reject the Hadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa or Imam Zuhri from Urwa b. Zubayr as a mere fabrication by some later people than faithfully transmitted words of Sayyida Aisha. Although there should have been thousands and thousands of different reporters to narrate about the prepubescent consumption of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah but except her we find no other Sahabi (companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) to narrate it. This shows that the news in fact did not originate at Makkah, Madina or Hijaz. It came to light for

²¹⁴ Al-Qur'an 3:110 Yousuf Ali.

the first time at Kufah in 145 AH i.e. about 144 years after the event. Should we then attach any credibility to it?

The extremely late origination of the report at Kufah has no credentials at all for the reason that Kufah had been the main centre of the Ghali Shiites, and even Basra contained large number of the Shiites. Both the cities had no existence during the life time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ because foundations of Kufah had been laid by Saad b. abi Waqas after the battle of Yarmuk in about 637-638 AD i.e. 17th of Hijra. As against this, Basra had become the garrison encampment of the Arab tribesmen for the first time during the caliphate of Umar (RA) in about 16th of Hijra. As such, the reports not originating from Makkah, Medina or Hijaz but reported for the first time in the cities founded years after the death of the Holy Prophet must not be entertained as reliable reports by the Muslim community. Alternately acceptance of such later news will not only destroy our belief in the God's certification of the completion of the religion of His Promised Prophet but may also place various injunctions of the Qur'an in the melting pot as we observe in the Christian theology till today.

Islam has no provision to rely on any Hadith damaging the most exalted standard of morality of the Holy Prophet ﷺ (Al-Qur'an 68:4) and the guidance in the Qur'an that "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah **a beautiful pattern (of conduct)**(33:21). This was the reason that we have to discuss the confictions of the report with the Qur'anic precepts, overall spirit of Islam and collective conduct of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ about child-marriage or pre-pubescent consummation of marriage by any of them. In case we find no instance of the same in about 124000 prophets of the Lord and a similar number of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ, we have no other option except to deny genuineness of the report attributed to Hisham b. Urwa and others.

The Prophet ﷺ as the Ideal Role-Model

All prophets had the prime duty to rehearse and revive the essentials of faith, law and the rituals of worship as per guidance from the Lord. The Holy Prophet (pbAh) too had to fulfill similar duties as performed by his predecessors. Being the final and the promised prophet, however, he had

the additional responsibility to perfect the religion and to establish the **most exalted standard of morality** to be imitated by the people for all times to come. As a corollary of the same, he also had to serve as a judge, an administrator and the perfect exemplar for implementation of various commandments of the Lord so that the believers may not have any confusion about practical implementation of the commandments. He was perhaps the only Prophet sent with the specific purpose of purifying or sanctifying the believers (Al-Qur'ān 2:151, 3:164). There being no possibility of the word of God to fail²¹⁵, we cannot assume any short fall in the personal sanctification of the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم nor can we assume any lapse on his part to fulfill his assignment in respect of his followers. Perfection of good moral character had been enjoined on him by the Almighty:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ.

Abū Hurayrah relates that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "I have only been sent to perfect good moral character."²¹⁶

We, therefore, firmly hold that the Holy Prophet (pbAh) was the paragon of virtue who lived the life of self-abnegation with the most exalted standards of morality.

We also recollect the prayer of Sayyidina Abraham for sending a prophet from amongst his descendants at Makkah "who shall rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in **scripture and wisdom, and sanctify** them: For Thou art the Exalted in Might, the Wise" (2:129). The acceptance of the prayer was affirmed by the Almighty in the following:

Allah did confer a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a messenger from among themselves, rehearsing unto them the Signs of Allah, **sanctifying them, and instructing them in Scripture and Wisdom**, while,

²¹⁵ Isaiah 55:11.

²¹⁶ *Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal*, Hadith No. 8595.

before that, they had been in manifest error.²¹⁷

It is evident from the above that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not only instructed his companions about the book and wisdom but had also sanctified them. No action of the Prophet ﷺ or collective practice of his followers could, therefore, fall short of wisdom and sanctification. There could be no probability for the Prophet ﷺ to commit any act falling short of perfect wisdom and sanctity suiting his status as the last and final prophet of the Lord. Had child marriage been the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ it was must for the Ummah to uphold it by their perpetual adherence to it. In the absence of any trace of the tradition of consuming marriage with a girl of tender age in the collective, constant or continuous action (عمل متواتر) of the companions of the prophet ﷺ and four generations thereafter, we have no option except to discard such narratives as incredible and fake.

Muslims always continued to believe that Almighty Allah had been choosing the most righteous and best of men to be blessed with His prophethood. All the prophets had, therefore, been sinless and the best of the human community (Al-Qur'an 86:6, 38:45-48). The Almighty keeps His chosen people purified from all passions and temptations. Prophets of the Lord always lived under constant protection and guidance of the Almighty especially during their missionary period on Earth. A band of watchers marches before and behind them who also oversee that the prophet ﷺ has delivered to his followers each and every message of the Lord. The same transpires from the revelation of the Lord:

إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا لِّئَلَّا تُبْغُوا
رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَخَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَخْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا

27. "Except an apostle whom He has chosen: and then **He makes a band of watchers march before Him and behind him,** **28.** "That He may know that They have (truly) brought and delivered the messages of their Lord: and He surrounds (All the mysteries) that are with them, and takes

²¹⁷ Ibid, 3:164 Yusuf Ali.

account of every single thing.²¹⁸

As such, the prophets cannot commit any transgression against any commandment of the Lord. In case any prophet happens to choose something lesser than the highest standard of character, the Lord reprimands him appropriately e.g. Al-Qur'an 8:67-68, 9:43, 9:84, 9:113, 33:37, 66:1, 80:1-4, etc. The Almighty, therefore, rescues the Prophets with His برهان (special sign) so that he may not diverge from the straight path. We, therefore, observe that even prior to missionary period of Prophet Joseph, the Lord had saved him from sinfulness. The Almighty reveals that:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنَّ رَأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ كَذَلِكَ لَتَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ الشُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِن
عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ

and (with passion) did she desire him, and He would have desired her, but that He saw the evidence of His Lord: Thus (did we order) that we might turn away from Him (all) evil and shameful deeds: for He was one of Our servants, sincere and purified.²¹⁹

In case of Sayyida Aishah, however, we find neither a commandment from the Lord allowing the holy Prophet ﷺ to have sex with prepubescent girl, nor a warning to desist from such an action in future. This implies that there had been no such occurrence at all. Sayyida Aishah had definitely been fully mature at the time of the consummation of her marriage which called for no cognizance from the Almighty.

The Qur'an is the first and the most reliable source to determine the faith as well as the law and traditions of Islam. We find no precepts of Qur'an to allow consummation of marriage before Bulooḡ of the Spouses. It also has no reference about the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aisha at the age of 9 years. Similarly, we find no narrative from the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself to affirm the said age.

²¹⁸ Al-Qur'an 72:27-28 Yousuf Ali.

²¹⁹ Al-Qur'an 12:24 Yousuf Ali.

GUIDANCE FROM THE QUR'AN

Qur'an is the central religious text containing Divine precepts of conduct and glad tidings for human beings along with admonition to refrain from the forbidden and to abide by the law of the Lord as revealed by Him. The readers interested to know about the compilation and preservation of the Qur'an may refer to the chapters titled 'Al-Qur'an I' and 'Al-Qur'an II' in our book '*God, Creation and Guidance*'.²²⁰ The believers, therefore, must look into the Qur'an to affirm their faith as well as the law of the Lord to abide by the same. Since the Lord had also declared Qur'an as Al-Furqan,²²¹ therefore, they need to turn to the Qur'an to resolve any confusion or misunderstanding about the law and faith in Islam. It has been reported about Sayyida Aishah that whenever someone asked her about some matter of jurisprudence, she would firstly seek the relevant guidance from the Qur'an. In case no detailed guidance could be found in the Qur'an, she would search for the same in the Sunnah i.e. the words spoken by the Holy Prophet ﷺ or the actions taken by him in different aspects of life. In doing so, she would always see to it that the Hadith does not conflict with any part of the Qur'an. In case any report disagrees with some Aya of the Qur'an, it must stand rejected as a true narrative from the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Scholars usually examine each and every Hadith comparing firstly with the precepts of the Qur'an and then by observing its compatibility with the teachings and traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam. In addition to the above, the Muhaddithin have also devised many other means to evaluate the genuineness or fakery of the Ahadith. Any narrative conflicting with the overall teachings of the Qur'an cannot, therefore, be accepted as a truly reported Hadith from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In the present situation, therefore, we shall be evaluating the contents of

²²⁰ For further studies the readers may also refer to the book '*Tareekh-ul-Qur'an*' by Abdullah Sarim al-Azhari of Egypt.

²²¹ Al-Qur'an 2:185, 3:4, 25:1.

the Hadith alleging the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aisha at her tender age firstly by finding its **harmoniousness with the teachings of the Qur'an and then with its conformity to the moral excellence of the earliest Muslim society as certified by the Lord himself** (Al-Qur'an 3:110). In the present discussion, therefore, we shall seek guidance of the Lord in the respect of marriage and the laws pertaining to women. We, therefore, start from the marriage in the following:

Marriage (النكاح)

Marriage in Islam is a solemn agreement or contract consecrated in the name of the Almighty (Al-Qur'an 4:21). Blessings of the Lord, therefore, cover the spouses as long as they live in obedience to Him. Marriage aims at a permanent relationship between the partners for continuous harmony between them to improve chastity, worldly performance, spiritual elevation and social integrity of the partners. Marriage, therefore, is the only way inspired by the Almighty to multiply human beings²²² and to prevent corruption in the lieage of their offspring.²²³

According to Ain al-Hidaya (عين الهداية) the literal (حقيقى) meaning of Nikaah are 'Wati' (وطى) i.e. trampling, treading under foot, lying with a woman or taking under the arms while its metaphorical meanings are Aqd عقد i.e. tie or agreement. The author further said that النكاح ينعقد بالإيجاب والقبول i.e. Nikaah occurs with proposal and acceptance.²²⁴ At page 7 the same writer states that **"the 5th condition of marriage is the willingness/ consent of the woman as an adult woman whether she is virgin or non-virgin"**. This, therefore, can be taken as a definition of Bulooḡh i.e. adolescence or puberty for the female.

It is also worth noting here that responsibilities of companionship with the husband, entail not only the sex and companionship but also attending to multiplicity of household affairs and rearing the children which involve greater responsibilities and maturity than mere handling of

²²² Gen 1:28.

²²³ For further details about marriage please refer to the the Chapter on marriage in our book 'Islam as Emancipator of Women', Vol. 1.

²²⁴ *Ain al-Hidaya* (Urdu) tr. by Sayyid Amir Ali (Lahore: Maktaba Rahmania, Urdu Bazar, 1992), p. 2.

one's assets about which the Lord had commanded the guardians to keep testing and trying the abilities of their wards. It is, therefore, wrong to assume that the institution of marriage can be used as a means to treat minor girls as sex animals. Islam is undoubtedly the greatest benefactor of the female sex, the slaves and the oppressed people etc. The action of abusing minor children through sex or other exploitation can, therefore, be termed as a clear-cut violation of the spirit and teachings of Islam. Instead of allowing marriage or sex with the minors the Qur'an mentioned *Buloogh* for Nikah as the age of full consent or full maturity.²²⁵ It is the full age (Al-Qur'an 28:14) when the Almighty grants power, knowledge and wisdom (Al-Qur'an 12:22). It goes without saying, therefore, that Sayyida Aysha had attained full maturity and power by the time she joined the battle of Badr and Uhud. Had she remained an irresponsible girl of tender age up to the Battle of Banu Mustaliq (8th of Sha'aban, 6 AH), she could not have excelled in knowledge over all other women. Her superiority over all other Muslim women including the wives of the Prophet ﷺ could only be possible if she had accompanied the Holy Prophet ﷺ during more than 9 years of her full maturity. Had she remained just a teen-aged, reckless or neglectful girl till the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we must know the sources of her competence to interpret the Qur'an and to resolve difficult matters of jurisprudence which survive as guideposts for all jurists and interpreters of the Qur'an.

In spite of the fact that many scholars tacitly approve the validity of the Nikah of minors by their fathers or guardians yet we find neither permission nor any practice among the Muslims to consume the marriage with their brides before their buloogh. They must wait for their puberty. The minor, on attaining puberty, can use his right of consent either by joining with her husband or to dissolve the marriage before its consummation. The same is evident from the Ahadith quoted below:

²²⁵ For proper understanding of the term يبلغ اشده or يبلغ اشده the readers may also refer to 12:22, 28:14, 47:15, 6:152, 17:34

1) Abdur Rahman bin Yazid Al-Ansari and Mujamma bin Yazid Al-Ansari said: that a man among them who was called Khidam arranged a marriage for his daughter, and she did not like the marriage arranged by her father. She went to the Messenger of Allah and told him about that, and he annulled the marriage arranged by her father. Then she married Abu Lubabah bin Abdul-Mundhir.²²⁶

2) It was narrated from Ibn Buraidah that: his father said: "A girl came to the Prophet and said: 'My father married me to his brother's son so that he might raise his status thereby.' The Prophet gave her the choice, and she said: 'I approve of what my father did, but I wanted women to know that their fathers have no right to do that.'²²⁷

3) It was narrated from Ibn Abbas that: a virgin girl came to the Prophet and told him that her father arranged a marriage that she did not like, and the Prophet gave her the choice.²²⁸

4) Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet said: "A matron should not be given in marriage until she is consulted, and a virgin should not be given in marriage until her permission is sought, and her silence is her permission."²²⁹

5) Ibn 'Abbas narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: "The matron has more right to herself than her Wali, and the virgin is to give permission for herself, and her silence is her permission."²³⁰

6) Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: "An orphan is to be consulted about herself, then if she is silent that is her permission, and if she refuses, then do not authorize it (the marriage) for her" (meaning: when she attains the age of puberty and refuses it).²³¹

7) Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said, "A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission." The people asked, "O Allah's Apostle! How can we know her permission?" He said, "Her silence (indicates her permission)."²³²

8) Narrated Khansa bint Khidam Al-Ansariya: that her father gave her in marriage when she was a matron and she disliked that marriage. So she went to Allah's Apostle and he declared

²²⁶ *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, Book 9, Hadith 1873.

²²⁷ *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, Book 9, Hadith 1874.

²²⁸ *Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, Book 9, Hadith 1875.

²²⁹ *Jami al-Tirmidhi*, Vol. 2, Ch. 18, Hadith No. 1107.

²³⁰ *Jami al-Tirmidhi*, Vol. 2, Ch. 18, Hadith No. 1108.

²³¹ *Jami al-Tirmidhi*, Vol. 2, Ch. 18, Hadith No. 1109.

²³² *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 7, Book 62, Hadith Number 67:

that marriage invalid.²³³

It is, therefore, evident from the above that Islam takes the consent of the virgin as a vitally determinant factor to validate the legal contract of marriage between two individuals. Islam has no place either for the forced marriages or continuation of the contract between the unwilling partners. In case a husband finds it difficult to reconcile with his wife, he can divorce her. Similarly, a wife finding herself strained and oppressed by the husband can demand dissolution of marriage through the court of law. In this respect we find a detailed law codified by the Islamic jurists to protect the rights of the spouses.

Being the greatest reformer and preacher who ever lived in the world, the Holy Prophet ﷺ not only stressed on the faith and law of Islam but also made strenuous efforts to impart wisdom and the highest standards of morality among his followers. To learn and memorise the Qur'an had, therefore, been the first priority of the believers. Second in importance had been the whole-hearted obedience to the guidance received from the prophet ﷺ and imitation of his exalted morality in all the phases of life. All the followers of the Prophet ﷺ had, therefore, been devoting their lives to learn the Qur'an and to imitate the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to form the best society in the world.

The fact is that Hisham's narrative about consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aisha at the age of nine years had been unknown to the people of Medina, Makkah and Hijaz up to the end of 2nd century AH. There is no reference to the fact that Sayyida Aishah had miraculously attained Bulooḡ at the age of 9 lunar years. She had been a lean and thin girl grown under strictly religious atmosphere and normal circumstances of the time. No abnormality about her growth can be traced in the books of history or Ahadith. The Islamic scriptures also do not mention the pre-time Bulooḡ of Sayyida Aishah. We, therefore, find no cogent reasons to support pretime Bulooḡ of Sayyida Aishah at 9 lunar years while keeping her physical growth and mental

²³³ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 69:

faculties freezed for about about 18 years i.e. from 5 Nabvi to the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in Rabi-ul-Awwal 11th AH.²³⁴ The aspersions such as immaturity, irresponsibility, imprudence or lack of awareness due to tender age of Sayyida Aishah stands strongly rebutted by an authentic Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as quoted below:

Narrated Abu Musa Al-Ashari: The Prophet said, "The superiority of 'Aysha to other ladies is like the superiority of Tharid (i.e. meat and bread dish) to other meals. Many men reached the level of perfection, but no woman reached such a level except Mary, the daughter of Imran and Asia, the wife of Pharaoh."²³⁵

Reverting to the possibility of pretime Bulooch of Sayyida Aishah, we observe that in the absence of any miracle or exception pointed out by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we cannot assume that Sayyida Aishah could have set aside the natural principles of growth and Bulooch. God says:

سُئِلَ اللَّهُ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَقُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَجِدْ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا

(Such was) the practice (approved) of Allah among those who lived aforetime: no change wilt Thou find In the practice (approved) of Allah.²³⁶

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَرِيمُ
وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

So set Thou Thy face steadily and truly to the faith: (establish) Allah's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind: no change (let there be) In the work (wrought) by Allah. That is the standard religion: but Most among Mankind understand not.²³⁷

Since, there could be no change in the pattern of the creation of the Lord, we find nothing substantial in the apology of certain defenders of the reports proving the fitness of Aisha (RA) for consummation of her marriage at 9

²³⁴ All Ahadith suggesting her as a girl playing with dolls having inadequate knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah etc. described in the chapter titled *The Tender Aged Girl* جارية حديث السن.

²³⁵ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Vol. 4, Book 55, *Hadith* No. 643.

²³⁶ Al-Qur'an 33:62 Yousuf Ali.

²³⁷ Al-Qur'an 30:30 Yousuf Ali.

lunar years. Had it been so, the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself would have narrated it as a miracle or an exception to the rule.

Unluckily Allama Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi is a strong supporter of the Ahadith narrating the tender age of Sayyida Aishah. He derides those who differ with the belated reports about the puberty of Sayyida Aishah at 9 lunar years. He says that such critics keep in view only the cold climate of Europe ignoring the possibility of very fast growth to adulthood in the Arabian countries. We respectfully beg to differ with him and hold that the time of Bulough does not differ much in the colder climates than in the warm weather. There can hardly be a difference of a year or so if any. Actually, due to free sex and publicity of the same the girls in Europe get puberty even earlier to those in the hotter climates of the World. We also do not endorse his opinion that Sayyida Aishah had been an exception to the rule and she was fit for marriage at 9 lunar years. He says:

تاہم یہ نبوت کی وہ استثنائی مثال ہے جس کی پیروی مسلمان کو صرف استثنائی صورت میں ہی کرنی چاہیے (سیرت عائشہ، ص 288)

It would have been much better for him to quote the source on which he based the afore-stated opinion. Since the history or the Ahadith do not mention it as a miracle or an exception to the rule, it was incumbent upon almost all the Muslims in the world to follow the pattern of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Qur'an Has no Provision for Child Molsetation

The Western critics argue that the Qur'an has explicitly permitted marriage and sex with minor children. To support their contention, they quote:

وَاللَّائِي يَئْسَنَ مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ إِنْ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ وَاللَّائِي لَمْ يَحْضُنَّ

وَأُولَاتِ الْأُمَمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا

Such of your women as have passed the age of monthly courses, for them the prescribed period, if ye have any doubts, is three months, **and for those who have no courses** (it is the same): for those who carry (life within their wombs), their period is until they deliver their burdens: and for those who fear Allah, He will make their path easy.²³⁸

In this respect, we cannot blame only the critics of Islam. Keeping in view the Ahadith about the age of Aysha as reported in the Sihah, even some of the Muslim scholars had been misled to interpret the verse of the Qur'an as an implicit permission for sex with children through marital union. Even Imam Bukhari himself had interpreted *وَاللَّائِي لَمْ يَحْضُنْ* as the girls in the tender age. In our opinion such scholars were extremely eager to make true the Ahadith about the age of Sayyida Aisha at the time of the consummation of her marriage. Due to such narratives in the Sihah, they were inclined to interpret the verse No. 65:4 quoted above as a permission to consume marriage with the immature spouses. The critics of Islam have, therefore, taken full advantage of these perverted meanings of the verse. They contend that the phrase *وَاللَّائِي* *لَمْ يَحْضُنْ* essentially applies to girls who did not have menstruation **because they were too young**. Since the verse pertains to the waiting period for the married women whose marriage had already been consumed, the critics of Islam deduce from it that the Qur'an had essentially allowed consummation of marriage of children before their puberty.²³⁹ This is, however, an extremely biased interpretation of the word of God. We strongly disagree with any such construal of the verse under discussion. Firstly we note that the verse starts as under:

وَاللَّائِي يَكْسَنَ مِنَ الْمَجْبُضِ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ

Such of your women as have passed the age of monthly courses.

²³⁸ Al-Qur'an 65:4 Yousuf Ali.

²³⁹ The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines puberty as 'the stage in people's lives when they develop from a child into an adult because of changes in their body that make them able to have children.

The verse undoubtedly pertains to نساء i.e. women which excludes immature girls or children. It, therefore, has no provision for child abuse or consummation of marriage before puberty or adolescence of the girls or women. Instead of inciting Islamic community to indulge into such a mal-practice, the verse simply covers certain exceptional or extraordinary instances where girls/ women²⁴⁰ do not have their menses up to and beyond the age of 15 years. Although the cases of such natural disorders might be very rare in the community yet their existence cannot be denied. Medical books describe the disorder as amenorrhea.²⁴¹ For details the readers may consult medical books to know the disorders causing non-occurrence of menstruation to girls or women up to and beyond 15 years and stoppage of the same much earlier than the normal time. We, therefore, firmly hold that the Qur'an neither permitted nor connived at the consummation of marriage before Bulough of the spouses as shall be discussed in the following.

We had a detailed discussion about marriage in the first volume of this book. It may be added here that marriage is a solemn moment of giving consent as per its reference in the Qur'an in which the Almighty forbids the believers from depriving them of their dowries. God says:

And how could ye take it when ye have gone in unto each other, and they have Taken from you a solemn covenant?²⁴²

The impact of the covenant on the spouses is such that:

They are your garments and ye are their garments.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ For better comprehension of the term لم يحضن, the readers may refer to the book *Umar-e-Aisha par Tahqeeqi Nazar*, p. 226-237 where the scholar has concluded that واللائى لم يحضن applies only to adult married women whose marriage had already been consumed.

²⁴¹ To know about Amenorrhea the readers may consult "*Menstruation and the menstrual cycle fact sheet*". Office of Women's Health. 23 December 2014. Archived from the original on 26 June 2015.

²⁴² Al-Qur'an 4:21 Yousuf Ali.

²⁴³ Al-Qur'an 2:187 Yousuf Ali.

To make the covenant binding, therefore, it is necessary that the parties should be sane, adult and free to give a legal effect to the covenant. The Qur'an has, therefore, repeatedly mentioned marriage with النساء i.e. women than with the minors e.g. فانكحو ما طاب لكم من النساء (Al-Qur'an 4:3). Similarly, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

احملوا النساء على اھوائھن

Give women in marriage to men they approve of.²⁴⁴

Consent becomes seriously flawed in the absence of maturity, freedom or sanity of either of the spouses. We, however, observe that no other scripture except the Qur'an has specifically stressed on بلغوا النكاح i.e. adulthood or marriageable age commonly accepted by the people. The *Kitab al-Fiqah* also counts adulthood and freedom of spouses among the primary conditions of marriage. The age of prudence and sensibility, therefore, is the primary condition to validate the consent of marriage. Similar terms are also binding on the witnesses to the marriage. Lunacy, immaturity or lack of freedom of the witnesses may also invalidate the contract of marriage.²⁴⁵

As regards the Jews and the Christians, there had been no mention of the puberty. It was only with effect from the 13th century AD that the Christians started accepting marriage as a covenant between adults who are mentally, emotionally and spiritually mature.²⁴⁶ The consummation of marriage before puberty, therefore, has no room in Islam. The defenders of the narratives attributed to Hisham b. Urwa had perhaps been following the evangelists innocently to make the scripture true. It is in the *New Testament* that we come across the recurring theme that **"This happened in order to make the scripture come true"**.²⁴⁷ Muslim apologists too had been primarily concerned to make the

²⁴⁴ *Ibn Add fi-Al-Qanaa*, cited by *The Treasure (Sayings of the Holy Prophet)*, compiled by Fakir Syed Waheeduddin, 2nd Edition, (Lahore: Maktaba Tamir-i-Insaniyat, Urdu Bazar), p. 3.

²⁴⁵ *Kitab al-Fiqah* by Abdurrahman Al-Jaziri, Urdu tr. Manzoor Ahsan Abbasi, 2nd Edition, (Lahore: Himayat-e-Islam Press, Railway Road, 1981), p. 31.

²⁴⁶ *Encyclopaedia of Catholicism*, G. Ed. Richard P. McBrien (Harper Collins Publisher, 1995), s.v. 'Marriage', p. 821.

²⁴⁷ John 17:12.

Sihah Khamsa true without pondering that pre-buloogh consummation of marriage is not only libellous against the Holy Prophet ﷺ but also blemishing the image of Islam. From the history of the faith of Israel, we learn that Moses had been repeatedly stressing the Israelites to remember and record the teachings of faith and law as preached by him. Although they had been taking lot of care to preserve the words of the law and other events pertaining to the life and conduct of Moses yet they failed to preserve the pristine purity of the faith and Law of Moses. The Lord had, therefore, been sending thousands of His prophets succeeding the earlier prophets to revive and rehearse the essentials of law and faith of Moses. Ultimately, the Almighty sent John and Jesus as the last warners among them. Both of them had, therefore, been traveling from place to place to warn the people for repentance before the Lord. The community treated them like many other prophets before them and failed to keep any true record of their teachings and preachings of faith. No one received dictation from Jesus nor kept any reliable record of his preachings. The end result was that **Jesus of history** stood lost into oblivion forever. In the absence of any credible information, therefore, the evangelists had to **reconstruct Jesus of faith** by applying certain verses of the Old Testament, the Epistles of St. Paul and hearsay gathered from anonymous sources. Evangelists like Mathew and John searched through the entire Old Testament to find any predictions pertaining to earlier events to reapply the same on the person of Jesus and to reconstruct his life events accordingly. Although all of them had taken full advantage of the Old Testament yet John the Evangelist had been more frequent to support the events described by him with the appellation that:

"This happened in order to make the scripture come true".²⁴⁸

We, therefore, feel that most of the justifications proffered by the Islamic apologists to defend 6/9 years age of

²⁴⁸ John 17:12, 19:24, 19:28, 19:36, Acts 1:16, James 2:23 etc.

Sayyida Aishah aim primarily at making true the relevant Ahadith reported by Hisham b. Urwa or others at Kufah in about 145 AH and thereafter.

Seeratu Rasoolillah attributed to Ibn Ishaq²⁴⁹ (85–159 AH) but edited by Ibn Hisham²⁵⁰ (d. 213/218 AH) also lends support to the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at 9 years. His primary source for that had been Imam Zuhri reporting from Urwa b. Zubair. Scholars, however, give no credit to his reports because they find no evidence to the effect that Zuhri had either seen or heard Urwa b. Zubair. As regards reports in other Ahadith, we shall be discussing the same subsequently.

Our study shows that Hisham's narrative was incongruous with the prevailing customs in the Quryash of Makkah, historical facts, reasons and other conditions necessary to accord authenticity to such reports. After a critical appraisal of all the circumstances and evidence on record, we have reached the conclusion that the age of Ayshah might have been 16-18 years at the time of her Nikaah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ while her marriage might not have been consumed before she attained the age of 20-21 years.

We also observe that most of the Muhaddithin take the report as a Khabar-e-Wahid unknown to the first eight طبقات (classes or orders of men). The Hadith, therefore, had been subject to criticism of the Muhaddithin during all times since its inclusion in the Sihah Sittah.

Proclamation of Nikah

Instead of being a secret pact, Nikah in Islam is widely proclaimed social event attended or witnessed by close relatives, friends and many other people in the society.

²⁴⁹ His full name was Muhammad bin Ishaq bin Yasaar ibn Khayar. He had collected oral traditions that formed the basis of the biography of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. His life account and characteristics shall be discussed subsequently.

²⁵⁰ Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-Malik bin Hisham ibn Ayyub al-Himyari edited the biography of prophet of Lord Almighty Allah "*Muhammad Mustafa Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Aalihi Wa Sallam*" written by Ibn Ishaq. His knowledge of Ibn Ishaq's biography was derived from Ziyād al-Baqqā'i (d. 183/799), who lived mostly in Kufa. Later Ibn Hisham's As-Sira would chiefly be transmitted by his pupil, Ibn al-Barqī.

According to the saying of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the event of marriage must be publicized so that all the people may know of it:

حدثني عبد الله بن الأسود القرشي عن عامر بن عبد الله بن الزبير عن أبيه أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال أعلنوا النكاح

..... a marriage should be widely proclaimed.²⁵¹

The marriage of the Prophet ﷺ with Sayyida Aishah being a well-publicized event in the Muslim society, must have been known almost to all the believers as well non-believers at Medina. The complete ignorance of more than 100,000 companions of the Prophet ﷺ besides numerous enemies of Islam about any oddity in the event can, therefore, be taken as a proof that **consummation of the marriage had occurred exactly as per norms of the society**. The belated report ascribed to Hisham or his father Urwa b. Zubayr at Kufah about 144 years after the event cannot, therefore, be accepted as true.

In view of the above, we find no sound explanation for keeping the news of the Holy Prophet's joining with Sayyida Aishah as a secret for the first four or five generations of Islam. We also have no grounds to presume that such an unusual event if true could have escaped the criticism of the enemies of Islam including the Munafiqoon, and the non-believers. The absence of any criticism from them, therefore, is enough to disprove the allegation of the consummation of marriage of Sayyida Aisha at a tender age. Had it been otherwise then all the Muhaddithin and scholars of Medina should have transmitted this occurrence to their disciples. The absence of any report from Medina up to the end of 2nd century AH, therefore, is enough to expose spuriousness of the Hadith ascribed to Hisham b. Urwa. We also know that Imam Malik had been taking Hisham b. Urwa as a truthful reporter of Ahadith during about first 73 years of his life. He, therefore, included many Ahadith from him in the *Muwatta* until the time Hisham b. Urwa grew extremely old and started suffering from mental

²⁵¹ *Musnad* Imam Ahmad, Vol IV.

disorder and loss of memory. It was during the said ailment that Imam Malik started avoiding Hisham b. Urwa and also declared that "*Hisham bin Urwa Kazzab*".²⁵²

Had the Prophet ﷺ indulged into child abuse, even under the pretext of marriage, the enemies of Islam and the hypocrites would not have spared to decry him severely. Since no one among the enemies of Islam raised any objection on this marriage even up to the end of the 2nd century AH, we can declare with absolute certainty that the marriage of Sayyida Aysa had taken place in the normal circumstances. Nothing unusual or odd could be observed by the friends or foes of Islam in it. The entire non-existence of the issue among the Muslim community before the compilation of Sihah Sittah (232-303 AH), therefore, points out the later fabrication of the Hadith.

As per reports, the Nikah of Sayyida Aishah might have been solemnized at the age of her Bulooch about three years earlier than she started living with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In the absence of any other report from Sahaba, Tabieen or Taba Tabieen about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah, we cannot rely on the sole report attributed to Hisham b. Urwa believed to have narrated it in about 145-146 AH at Kufah Iraq when due to superannuation and indebtedness, he had already lost his senses, sight and memory.

Bulooch (بلوغ) the Marriageable Age

Bulooch for the females had commonly been known as the time when the girls start getting menses and acquire the capability of conception or procreation. The Bible also describes purpose of marriage as companionship and procreation. The creation of women to serve as helpmeets to men so that they may live in tranquility as regards sex and companionship has been counted among the signs of the Almighty so that human beings may live a successful life (Al-Qur'an 30:21). The Bible too contained the commandment of the Lord to "*Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the Earth*" (Gen 1:28).

²⁵² Vol. I of *Tareekh-e-Baghdad*, cited by *Ummahat-al-Mumineen Urdu* by Hakeem Mehmood Ahmed Zafar p. 103.

The terms بلغ or بلوغ has been used in the Qur'an to denote different phases of the human life. While referring to the vision about the sacrifice of Ishmael, The Lord had revealed that:

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ

Then, when (the son) reached (the age of) (serious) work with him, (...).²⁵³

This stage, therefore, refers to the age of Ishmael preceding the age of marriage (بلغوا النكاح).

The Qur'an is perhaps the only book of the revealed religions which specifically mentions about Bulough al-Nikah i.e. the marriageable age which is associated with the age of prudence and procreation deemed fit for handing over the properties to the orphans. It ordains that:

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَى حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ (...)

6. make trial of orphans until They reach the age of marriage; if then ye find sound Judgment In them, release their property to them; (...).²⁵⁴

It is evident from the above that instead of describing the term بلغوا النكاح in years the Qur'an takes it as a period of full maturity as per popular concept (معروف) of the society. بلغوا النكاح has, therefore, been taken as a measuring rod to determine the fitness of the orphans to hold and manage the affairs regarding their property prudently. As regards the ancient Arabs, they usually married their daughters between the ages of 18 and 30 years. The People of book also had no ambiguity about the normal age of marriage prevailing in their communities. بلغوا النكاح, therefore, implies the marriageable age prevailing among the society.

Child marriage had no doubt been prevailing among the extremely poor societies who usually sold their female children to meet their immediate needs or to transfer the burden to the groom's family. We find no instances of child

²⁵³ Al-Qur'an 37:102 Yousuf Ali.

²⁵⁴ Al-Qur'an 4:6 Yousuf Ali.

marriage or child abuse among the Arabs even under the pretext of marriage. Qur'an's stress on Bulooḡ is also evident from the following:

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِاتِّبَاعِ هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ ...

And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attain the age of full strength...;²⁵⁵

Firstly we must keep in mind that the term orphans covers only the minors. As soon as the orphans attain adulthood, they are counted among the ordinary members of the society. As such the **Qur'an that prohibits the community even from getting near the property of minors, cannot be expected to allow physical molestation or sexual exploitation of the minors even by marrying them.** The community must, therefore, wait till the minors attain full strength and prudence (يبلغ أشده) as ordained by the Lord.

Different communities in the world have clear-cut concept of the age for marrying their children. Instead of specifying the age in years, therefore, the Lord used the term Bulooḡ al-Nikah for handing over properties to the orphans only because it was a commonly known (معروف) term throughout the world. Islam, therefore, did not suggest any marriage earlier or later than the prevailing customs in the society. It also did not determine Bulooḡ by years as we find in various countries of the world. Instead of the fixing it in terms of years, Islam left the determination of the marriageable age to each society in accordance with their culture and environments.

Instead of favoring celibacy or undue delay in the marriage, Islam exhorts the Muslim adults to marry as soon as they find it convenient. Many people continue delaying the marriage of their sisters or daughters merely to avoid distribution of the property. They must not, therefore, hold up women from their lawful rights of marriage or utilization of the property owned by them. Early marriage of adult males and females has also been recommended as a safeguard against moral laxity and promiscuity. Similarly, certain divorcees or widows in the community are left to suffer from loneliness and destitution simply because the

²⁵⁵ Al-Qur'an 6:152 and 17:34 Yousuf Ali.

society neglects their rights. Islam, therefore, recommends that marriage or remarriage of the women may not be postponed beyond the time the parents find suitable matches for them.

حَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ وَهْبٍ عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْجُهَنِيِّ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو
 بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَهُ:
 "يَا عَلِيُّ: ثَلَاثٌ لَا تُؤَخَّرُهَا: الصَّلَاةُ إِذَا آتَتْ، وَالْجَنَازَةُ إِذَا حَضَرَتْ، وَالْأَيُّمُ إِذَا وَجَدْتَ لَهَا
 كُفُورًا".

Narrated/Authority of Ali reported that the Prophet (SAW) said to him, "O Ali! **Do not postpone three things: prayer when it is time for it, funeral when it is ready and the marriage of an unmarried woman when a suitable match is found.**"²⁵⁶

It is worth noting here that the Hadith applies to women in the category of ايم which usually means single women who are either divorcees or widows in the marriageable age. Unmarried virgins, however are described in the Ahadith as البكر. As such, this Hadith cannot be misconstrued to suggest premature marriage of the virgins. As regards بكر or minors they remain subject to بلغوا النكاح as ordained by the Qur'an. The Qur'an has given an added stress to Buloogh by the words يبلغ اشده (Al-Qur'an 40:67) where buloogh comes after many earlier stages including childhood. God says:

It is He who has created you from dust then from a sperm-drop, then from a leech-like clot; then does He get you out (into the Light) As a child: **then lets you (grow and) reach your age of full strength**; then lets you become old, - though of you there are some who die before; - and lets you reach a term appointed; In order that ye may learn wisdom.

As such, the term of بلغوا النكاح means an age of full maturity. The Qur'an had been so much strict about بلوغ (Buloogh) that it prohibited even the relatives or guardians of the

²⁵⁶ Sunan Tirmidhi, Chapter 2, Hadith No: 171 [Musnad Ahmed 828, Ibn e Majah 1486]

orphans to deprive the women (divorcees or widows) from inheriting their husbands against their will.²⁵⁷ Allama Yousuf Ali in his exposition no. 527 has written that '*among many nations including Arabs in the days of ignorance, a stepson or a brother took possession of a dead man's widow or widows along with his goods and chattels. This shameful custom is forbidden*'. As such, the religion that prohibits the believers to encroach upon the property belonging to the minors or helpless women cannot be expected to allow encroachment upon the physique and freedom of the women, orphans or the minors. The consummation of marriage of any woman before **her age of consent** and without obtaining her will can, therefore, be taken as a forced marriage which has not been permitted by Islam. As regards the age of consent for marriage, the same has always coincided with the age of puberty throughout the history. Since the approval of the girl has a legal standing in Islam, therefore, she must be fully mature to enable herself to grant the lawful consent. It will, therefore, be perversion of meanings to interpret Nikah as a permission to have sex with the female children who had not attained the age of marriage or procreation. History bears witness to the fact that the Muslim Society has always refrained from the vice of consummation of Nikah before Bulough of the girls.

Scholars Opinions on Bulough

Sex out of wedlock is punishable as a capital crime in Islam. No consent can validate the same. **As regards the marriage, the same is preconditioned with puberty, full maturity and willing consent of the spouses.** Minors' consent has no meanings in law. Islam is so careful about human rights that it cannot tolerate any coercion or abuse of women. In Surah Al-Nisaa we find the divine guidance for test and trial of the orphans about their sagacity or maturity before their properties are handed over to them. The Lord ordains that:

- 5.** To those weak of understanding Make not over your property, which Allah hath made a means of support for you,

²⁵⁷ Al-Qur'an 4:19.

but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice. **6. Make trial of orphans *until they reach the age of marriage***; if then ye find sound judgment in them, release their property to them; but consume it not wastefully, nor in haste against their growing up. If the guardian is well-off, Let him claim no remuneration, but if he is poor, let him have for himself what is just and reasonable. When ye release their property to them, take witnesses in their presence: But all-sufficient is Allah in taking account.²⁵⁸

We may also point out that some scholars have rendered the verse 4:6 in the following words:

Test the orphans, so that if they have reached the **age of procreation** (Balaghu Al Nikah), and if (you) discerned from them sound judgment then deliver to them their fortune.

Bulugh al-Nikah, therefore, can be translated as the age of procreation, age of marriage and age of puberty that also includes condition of sound judgment to discharge the responsibilities normally associated with puberty. This is the period of life when one's consent may attain the legal acceptance.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica 2018 records that:

A legal capacity to transact belongs to any person "of prudent judgment" (rāshid), a quality that is normally deemed to arrive with physical maturity or puberty. There is an irrebuttable presumption of law (1) that boys below the age of 12 and girls below the age of 9 have not attained puberty, and (2) **that puberty has been attained by the age of 15 for both sexes**. Persons who are not rāshid, on account of minority, mental deficiency, simplicity, or prodigality, are placed under interdiction: their affairs are managed by a guardian and they cannot transact effectively without the guardian's consent.²⁵⁹

According to the 11th edition of the *Oxford Dictionary*, the age of majority is when a person is legally full adult usually

²⁵⁸ Al-Qur'an 4:5-6 Yousuf Ali.

²⁵⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Noel James Coulson, (Publisher: Encyclopædia Britannica, inc. April 13, 2018, s.v. 'Sharī'ah'.

either 18 or 21 years. Most of the western countries, therefore, include all persons below 18 years among children than the adults.

In his *Tafseer Jame Al-Bayan* (Urdu), Syed Amir Ali has described حتى اذا بلغوا النكاح as an age where an orphan boy starts getting seminal discharge or a girl starts getting menses. According to Imam Shafi, it usually happens at the age of 15 years. Imam Awzai, Abu Yousuf, Imam Muhammad and Imam Abu Hanifa take the بلوغ i.e. maturity at the age of 18 years.²⁶⁰

Allama Ibn Katheer has also taken nocturnal discharge or menses as a sign of majority but as regards the age, he takes it as 15 years. In support of his reasoning, he refers to the Ahadith quoted by us from Bukhari and Muslim that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not allowed Abdullah bin Umar to join the Battle of Uhud when he was just 14 years old but later on, the Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed him to join the battle of trench when he was 15 years or more. (*Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, Vol. I, Tr. by Moulana Muhammad Junagari, Maktaba Quddusia, Urdu Bazaar Lahore).

Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Abu Bakr Qurtubi translated by Peer Muhammad Karam Shah al-Azhari also agrees with 15 years as the age of maturity for which he refers to a large number of scholars including Imam Awzai, Shafii, Ahmed bin Hanbal and others. In addition to the same, he records that according to Imam Abu Hanifa, the age of Maturity is 17 to 19 years. (See pages, 56-57 of 3rd Volume of *Tafseer Qurtubi*, by Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Ahmad Qurtubi, (Urdu) Zia-ul-Qur'an Publications, Lahore).

According to Maulana Abdul-Hameed Swati, Imam Abu Hanifa had opined that a girl gets mature at the age of 17 years while a boy attains maturity at 18 years. (see pg. 68 Mualim al-Irfan, Urdu, Vol. V, Farooq Ganj, Gujranwala). Similarly, Maulana Abdul-Majid Daryabadi writes that the age of maturity in the Hanfi school of Islamic law is 18 years for boys and 17 years for girls (Elaboration under point 518, pg. 303, *Tafsir-ul-Qur'an*, Vol. I, Darul-Ishaat, Karachi).

We had already referred to the collection of Ahadith i.e. *Muwatta Imam Malik* and his jurisprudence which contain no report about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah.

²⁶⁰ Syed Amir Ali, *Muhib-ur-Rahman* Vol. II, (Lahore: Deeni Kutub Khana 38, Urdu Bazaar), p. 215.

Similarly, we find no reference to the age of Sayyida Aishah in the collection of Ahadith or jurisprudence prepared by Imam Abu Hanifah al-Numaan bin Sabit (80-150 AH), Imam Abu Yousuf (113-181 AH), Imam Muhammad Ibn-ul-Hasan al-Shybbani (132-189 AH), Abū Abdullāh Muhammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi'ī (150-204 AH) and in the jurisprudence of Imam Ahmed b. Muhammad b. Hanbal (164-241 AH). As regards the Hadith number 26288 Vol. 2, Musnad Imam Ahmad, the scholars observe that the phrases such as ((وَعَائِشَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ)) and ((وَأَنَا يَوْمَئِذٍ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ)) are obviously later insertions in the collection ascribed to Imam Ahmad. For details, please refer to pgs 221-224 of *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmad. This amended version of Musnad Imam Ahmad might have led the collectors of Sihah Khamsa to include the Ahadith pertaining to the tender age of Sayyida Aishah in their collections prepared subsequently. We, therefore, find no existence of the report about the tender age of Sayyida Aisha before the circulation of the collections ascribed to Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Imam Nasai, Imam Abu Daud, Imam Tirmidhi during 232 to 302 AH.

The Qur'anic Guidance about Bulough

Here is another valuable guidance of the Almighty to the believers:

And who, whenever they are reminded of their Sustainer's message, do not throw themselves upon them [as if] deaf and blind.²⁶¹

Allama Asad has, therefore, commented on it that the God-conscious people are deeply desirous of understanding the message of the Lord. They listen to it with wide awake ears and look into it with seeing eyes. In addition to the same we find in the Qur'an that:

O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with anynews, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly,

²⁶¹ Al-Qur'an 3:164 Muhammad Asad.

and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done.

According to various Mufasssireen the Ayah pertains to the event when the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent Waleed b. Uqba to collect the Zakat from Bani Mustaliq. Due to certain unknown reasons, Waleed became scared of the tribe and reported refusal of Bani Mustaliq to pay the Zakat. Maulana Mawdudi comments that:

On this critical occasion when on account of believing in a baseless report a grave blunder was about to be committed, Allah gave the Muslims this guiding principle to be followed on receipt of news: 'Whenever you receive important news bearing upon a vital matter, you should not accept it immediately but should first examine the man who has brought it. If he is an evil man whose report may not be authentic normally, you should inquire into it carefully to ascertain the truth instead of accepting it and acting on it immediately.' From this Divine Command an important legal principle is deduced, the sphere of application of which is very vast. (...). On the basis of this very principle the traditionists introduced the art of critical appraisal in the science of Hadith in order to determine the value and worth of the people through whom traditions of the Holy Prophet reached the later generations, and the jurists established this principle in the law of evidence that in a matter from which a Shari'ah value can be deduced, or a duty imposed on a person; the evidence of an evil man would be unacceptable.²⁶²

The Qur'an has, therefore, ignored no aspects of human moral life where at least some epigrammatic guidance has not been provided to the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for transmitting the same to the believers.

As regards the moral conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the Almighty himself affirmed the utmost excellence of his moral uprightness. Musnad-e-Ahmad reported Hazrat Ayshah having said:

عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ هِشَامِ بْنِ عَامِرٍ . قَالَ : أَتَيْتُ عَائِشَةَ . فَقُلْتُ : يَا أُمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْخَبْرَ بِي بَخْلَقِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ . قَالَتْ : كَانَ خُلُقُهُ الْقُرْآنَ أَمَا تَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ قَوْلَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

²⁶² *The Meaning of Qur'an by Maulana Mawdoodi*, eng. Tr. by A.A. Kamal, Vol. 1, (Lahore: Islamic Pub. Pvt. Ltd., 13-E, Shahalam Market, 2000), s.v. 49:6, p. 81.

: (وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ) . قُلْتُ : فَإِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَتَبَيَّنَ . قَالَتْ : لَا تَفْعَلْ أَمَا تَقْرَأُ : (لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ) فَقَدْ تَزَوَّجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَقَدْ وُلِدَ لَهُ . أَخْرَجَهُ أَحْمَدُ 91/6

Saad bin Hisham bin Aamir said that I came to Aishah and said 'O' mother of the believers, tell me about the moral character of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), She said that **Qur'an was his character**. Do you not read what Allah said in the Qur'an "**And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character**"?, I said 'I want to dedicate (my life for worship only)', She said do not do so, do you not read (in the Qur'an), "Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah **a beautiful pattern (of conduct)**", and (we know) that in deed the Prophet (peace be upon him) married women and he (also) had children (from them).²⁶³

As such, Umm-ul-Mumineen Ayshah bore witness to the fact that the life pattern of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was exactly in accordance with the precepts of morality in the Qur'an. It is, therefore, evident from the above that her observation could only be authentic if she had perfect competence to know the entire Qur'an with proper interpretation of the same. While doing so, she also referred to the most exalted standard of moral excellence of the Prophet as affirmed by the Almighty Himself (Al-Qur'an 68:4). In view of this, **no believer can ever imagine of the sexual behavior of the Prophet ﷺ that could be considered morally repugnant in any civilization in the world.**

We also observe that most of the societies in the world had been fully aware of the adverse effects of child marriage on the mental and physical health of the victims. Most of them, therefore, detested child marriage as child abuse than discovering any moral excellence in the same. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had been guided to follow the nature of creation (Al-Qur'an 30:30). As regards the conduct of the Prophet ﷺ, The Almighty had himself certified that "**And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character**"

²⁶³ Musnad-e-Ahmad, Ch. 6, Hadith No. 91.

(68:4). In addition to the above, the Lord had also guided the Prophet ﷺ that:

حُذِرِ الْعَفْوَ وَأَمْرٌ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

Hold to forgiveness; command what is right; But turn away from the ignorant.²⁶⁴

It is worth noting here that *وامر بالعرف* means "command what is Urf". Baydawi has explained it as *وامر بالمعروف : المعروف* i.e. what is considered good and recommended so among actions. In *Tafseer al-Nisafi*, we find similar exposition in different words i.e. (*وامر بالعرف*)

i.e. *بالمعروف والجميل من الافعال* او هو كل خصلة يرتضيها العقل و يقبلها الشرع. what is considered good and fine among actions, or every feature that reason confirms and that Islamic Law accepts. Similarly, in *در المنثور السيوطي*, we find *بالمعروف*, which can be translated into English as what is considered good. In view of this, we cannot ascribe any action or commandment to the Holy Prophet ﷺ which is unnatural or falls below the most beautiful pattern of conduct of the prophets of the Lord. As regards Sayyida Aishah, she had herself reminded us **to follow the most beautiful pattern of conduct of the Holy Prophet** (Al-Qur'an 33:21). As such, those who insist on the truth of the narrative about the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aisha at the age of 9 lunar years are laible to prove the wisdom, beneficence and beauty of conduct in the sex with the prepubiscent victims of marriage. In case they fail to do so, they make Islam as well as the prophet of Islam vulnerable to numerous calumnies for which we have no defense as long as we do not reject the fabrications originated from Kufah between 145 and 189 AH.

Although there had been no restraints on divorce in the Law of Moses (Deu 24:1-4), yet later on even divorce was restrained and the Jewish priests had been prohibited to marry a widow or a divorcee unless and until she had been the widow of a priest:

Neither shall they take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take maidens of the seed of the

²⁶⁴ Al-Qur'an 7:199 Yousuf Ali.

house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before.²⁶⁵

The book of Leviticus enjoins the High Priests that:

And he shall take a wife in her virginity. A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife.²⁶⁶

Almost all the religions in the world had always hated the divorce and gave preference to marriage with a virgin. Jesus has been reported having said that:

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.²⁶⁷

Similar views have also been recorded about the Hindu community in India:

Marriage according to Hindu Law is a sacrament and in theory the tie is indissoluble. The remarriage of widows especially in the higher classes, therefore, is looked upon with disfavour by the lawgivers as being something akin to adultery. Such marriages were held invalid and the offspring of such marriages held to be illegitimate.²⁶⁸

It was perhaps to reform such restraints on the remarriage of the widows and the divorcees that the Holy Prophet ﷺ solemnized his marriage with 10 women who were either widows, divorcees or both. His repeated marriages with such suppressed and despised women, therefore, removed all profanity and ill-fatedness from them.

We must also keep in mind that marriage with the virgins had always been the overwhelming trend among the youthful men. We know that by his own example, the Holy

²⁶⁵ Eze 44:22 KJV.

²⁶⁶ Lev 21:13-14 KJV.

²⁶⁷ Mat 5:31-32 KJV.

²⁶⁸ *Woman's Plight*, p. 133, quoted from Gedge, Evelyn C., *Women in Modern India*: (Bombay: Kitab Mehel, 1929), p. 128-129.

Prophet ﷺ had persuaded the Muslim community to marry the divorcees and the widows who usually did not exceed five to ten percent of them. More than 90% of the believers in the marriageable age had, therefore, been marrying the virgins. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ had set an example of consuming his marriage with a virgin of 9 lunar years, the Sunnah would have become obligatory for all believers marrying the virgins. The Qur'anic stipulation of *حتى اذا بلغوا النكاح* would become meaningless in such a case. Sayyida Aishah had been the only virgin married by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Marriage with her is, therefore, the only Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to marry a virgin. The prophet had himself stressed that:

"Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me."²⁶⁹

In the absence of finding any evidence that the earliest Muslim community had followed this Sunnah as attributed to Sayyida Aishah, Urwa and Hisham, the entire Muslim community including Sahaba, Tabieen, Taba Tabieen and their successors must be taken among those who turned away from the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. Should we accuse the earliest Muslim community as turning away from the Prophet ﷺ or reject the report attributed to Hisham b. Urwa in 145 AH at Kufah during the time that he had lost not only his senses but also his memory?

Keeping in view the certification of the Lord about the conduct of the earliest Muslim community (Al-Qur'an 3:110) we cannot attribute any lapse or negligence to the Sahaba, the Tabieen and other Muslims to discard the pattern of life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The only alternative with us, therefore, can be to reject the ascription of the Hadith to Hisham, Urwa and Sayyida Aishah.

The inclusion of a Hadith into any or more of the collections of Sihah (during 232-302 AH) cannot be taken as an ultimate proof of its truthfulness. The traditionists had, no doubt, been taking utmost care to reject the fake Ahadith yet the natural limitations of human sources and possibility of error or omission on their part cannot be ruled out. There had always been a chance of acceptance of some fake Hadith by them provided it had been attributed to

²⁶⁹ *Sunan an-Nasa'i* 3217, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith Number 3219.

most authentic sources by a person found apparently reliable by the Muhaddith. The Muhaddithin from third century AD till today had, therefore, been reviewing critically the Ahadith in Sihah Sittah. They unanimously observe that the correctness of Ahadith in Sihah exceeds 98%. Hardly less than two percent of the Ahadith fall below the strict standards of the critics. It is, therefore, said that the critics raised certain objections about 110 out of 7110 Ahadith in *Shahih Bukhari*. The percentage of the challenged Ahadith in *Sahih Bukhari*, therefore, is less than 1.5% of the collection.

Muslim Ummah does not believe in hundred percent accuracy of the Ahadith including those in the Sihah Sittah. Most of the challenged Ahadith consist of the reports where the Muhaddith had been eager enough not to omit anything said or done by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. **Such Ahadith were, therefore, recorded along with their Isnaad only for the scrutiny by the succeeding generations.** Eventually, failing to face the criticism such reports stood rejected by the jurists as well as the members of the Islamic community. Those who insist on the permissibility of the consummation of marriage at tender age must adduce additional evidence from the Qur'an, from other Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ or its wide-spread practice among the Sahaba and the Muslim community succeeding them. In the absence of supporting evidence, therefore, we need to examine the background of such reports critically.

The history of Islam contains ample evidence to the fact that the assassination of the third caliph i.e. Sayyidina Uthman b. Affan had caused a bifurcation in the Ummah.

Among the earliest people had been the Kharjites, Mutazilites or other Shiites etc. who fabricated various Ahadith to support their cause. Very few people today are aware of the fact that the incidence of the Holy Prophet's consummation of marriage with a child of 9 years is neither a historically established fact nor a widely known report that could be traced back among the Sahaba, the Tabieen and majority of the Taba Tabieen. People of Makkah, Medina and Hijaz had no knowledge of it till the 2nd part of the third century when the copies of the collections of Sihah Sittah reached there. It is, therefore, obvious that the

report pertaining to abuse of a child by the Holy Prophet ﷺ was unknown to the first four or five generations of Islam. Since it had no existence during the Genesis of Islamic community hence it must be treated as a later product to favor a particular sect in Islam. None among about 100,000 companions of the Prophet ﷺ knew anything about this report nor did he endorse this news. Similarly, out of a much larger number of Tabieen, Urwa b. Zubayr (23-94 AH) had been mentioned as the only reporter about the age of Ayshah at the time of the consummation of her marriage.

The most famous source to ascribe credibility to this fabricated account had been the widely circulated compilations of Ahadith commonly known as Sihah Sittah completed during 232-302 AH which referred to it repeatedly at several places in their books. Imam Bukhari (194-256 AH) had been the first and the most prominent compiler of Ahadith who accepted and included this report in his collection of Ahadith commonly known as Sahih Bukhari. **In spite of great care taken by him to scrutinize the Ahadith, he also had been eager not to abandon or ignore any news pertaining to the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.** It was for this reason that he included in his collection even those Ahadith which had been Khabar-e-Wahid but reported through such sources which seemed quite reliable to him. He, therefore, recorded even the challengeable Ahadith along with its Isnaad for further scrutiny by his successors. Hence, in spite of the utmost care taken by him, he never claimed any infallibility or inerrancy in his collection. It remains a human collection without any assurance of its absolute correctness or immutability like the Qur'an. The Ummah, however, appreciated the strenuous efforts and devotion of Imam Bukhari to such an extent that his collection received general acceptance as *اصح الكتاب بعد كتاب الله* i.e. the most credible book after the book of Allah i.e. the Qur'an. Imam Bukhari had included about 7397 Ahadith in his collection but the critics have challenged about 110 Ahadith while there also had been others to defend the same.

Since the Almighty had taken no responsibility to preserve the narratives of Sunnah in spite of all the care that could be taken by the human beings, we cannot be utterly certain about the validity of all the Ahadith in the aforesaid

collection. Ahadith, therefore, always remain subject to scrutiny and evaluation by the experts.

IMPORTANCE OF SUNNAH & COMPILATION OF SIHAH

We recall that almost all the Prophets of the Lord had addressed their people with the following invitation.

فاتقوا الله واطيعون

The followers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had, therefore, been more desirous to follow each and every example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as something of utmost importance and rectitude sanctity for them. Had the Holy Prophet ﷺ consumed the marriage of Aishah at the age of 9 years it would have survived as a permanent tradition among his companions and followers for all times to come. Imitation of this traditions would have been a must for them because the Lord had commanded them that:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

(...) So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which He withholds from you. And fear Allah. for Allah is strict In punishment.²⁷⁰

In view of the above, we cannot imagine of any neglect of the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ from the believers except when they did not know of it. Since the Lord had himself certified the completion of His law (Al-Qur'an 5:3) and declared the companions of the Prophet ﷺ as the best of the communities (Al-Qur'an 3:110), therefore, we cannot assume that either the Prophet ﷺ had failed to convey some directions of the Almighty to his companions or they could have abandoned anything from the same. We, therefore, have no option except to believe in spuriousness of the unduly belated report about the child marriage by the Prophet ﷺ attributed to Hisham b. Urwa.

²⁷⁰ Al-Qur'an 59:7 Yousuf Ali.

Almost each and every companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ remembered certain Ahadith about the life, conduct, teachings and preachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ etc. but we find no exhaustive list of all the transmitters of the Ahadith. They, however, included Sahaba like Ali bin Abi Talib, Umar bin Khatab, Abdullah bin Umar, Umar bin Hazam, Abdullah bin Masood, Abu Huraira, Rafe bin Khadij, Samura bin Jundub, Jabir bin Abdullah and Saad bin Ubada etc. From the information available to us today, the names of the top seven companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ reporting maximum number of Ahadith is given in the following.²⁷¹

	Name	Birth/Death	Narrations
1	Abu Hurayra (Abdurrahman b. Sakhr)	d. 58 AH	5374
2	Abdullah b. Umar.	1/2 Nbi-73 AH	2630
3	Anas b. Malik	d. 91 AH	2286
4	Umm al-Mumineen Aysha	d. 58 AH	2210
5	Abdullah b. Abbas	d. 68 AH	1660
6	Jabir b. Abdullah	d. 74 AH	1540
7	Abu Saeed Khudri	d. 74 AH	1270

Keeping in view the number of Ahadith transmitted by the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ Sayyida Aysha comes at the 4th place.

There had been many other Sahaba who had collected and preserved substantial number of Ahadith among whom had been Abdullah b. Amr b. Aas who had a collection of more than 1000 Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, Abdullah b. Masood (28 BH-33 AH) transmitted and preserved about 848 Ahadith. Other prominent names among the Sahaba to report Ahadith include Abu Dhar Giffari, Saad b. Abi Waqas, Muaz b. Jabal, Abu Dardaa. It is said that Hazrat Ali, Amr b. Hazam, Umar b. Khatab, Rafe b. Khadij, Samura b. Jundub, Saad b. Ubada had also left behind certain written records of Ahadith. In addition to them there had been more than a hundred thousand Sahaba at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The companions and successors of such Sahaba might have learnt many other Ahadith from them. Isn't it strange, therefore, that except for Sayyida Aysha,

²⁷¹ The list has been taken from *Uloom al-Hadith*, by Dr. Subhi Saleh Labanani, Urdu Tr. by Ghulam Ahmed Hariri (Faisalabad: Malik Brothers Publishers, 1968), p. 450.

we find no other companion of the Prophet ﷺ narrating about her tender age at the time of the consummation of her marriage. **The non-existence of the news at Medina, Makkah, Hijaz and almost entire Islamic world till about the end of 2nd century AH, therefore, can be taken as a conclusive proof of the later fabrication of the Hadith at Kufa a city in Iraq founded by Saad b. abi Waqas about 7 years after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.**

Sayyidina Umar b. Khattab had been extremely careful to narrate Ahadith. We, therefore, do not know the exact number of the Ahadith narrated by him. The book *Tareekh-ul-Hadeeth* by Prof. Abdussamad Sarim al-Azhari, however, has counted 59 other names of Sahaba (male or female) with the number of Ahadith narrated by them.²⁷²

We may also refer to the great Tabieen and Taba Tabieen known for their prominance in the transmission of Ahadith and Fiqh up to 150 AH at Medina, Makkah and other centres of Islam. They include:

S.n	Name	Birth/Death
1	Urwa bin Zubayr bin Awwam,	23-94 AH
2	Saeed b. Musayyib Makhzoomi,	21-94 AH
4	Abu Bakr b. Abdurrahman b. Harith b. Hisham	d. 94 AH
5	Abu Said b. abi al-Hasan al-Basri	21-110 AH
6	Ali b. Hussayn b. Ali b. Abu Talib Hashmi,	38-94/95 AH
7	Ubaidullah bin Abdullah b. Utba bin Masood	d. 98 AH
8	Salim b. Abdullah b. Umar	d. 106 AH
9	Sulayman b. Yasaar	d. 107 AH
10	Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr	d. 106 AH
11	Muhammad b. Sireen Mola Anas b. Malik	d. 110 AH
12	Saleh b. Kaisan (great Faqeeh of Medina)	40-140 AH
13	Muhammad b. Muslim (Ibn Shahab Zuhri)	50-126 AH
14	Nafe Mola ibn Umar	d. 117 AH
15	Abu Jaafar b. Ali b. Muhammad b. Husayn.	d. 114 AH
16	Abu Zannad Abdullah b. Zakwan	d. 131 AH
17	Yahya b. Saeed Ansari	d. 143 AH
18	Rabeea b. Abdurrahman Farooq	d. 136 AH
19	Imam Abu Hanifa	80-150 AH

²⁷² Abdullah Sarim al-Azhari of Egypt, *Tareekh-ul-Qur'an*, (Urdu) (Lahore: Maktaba Mueen al-Adab, Urdu Bazar, 1963), p. 173-174.

Besides the above Said b. Jubair (d. 95 AH), Abu Zannad Abdullah b. Zakwan and Hammam b. Munabba etc. are also counted among prominent collectors and narrators of Ahadith. With the exception of Urwa b. Zubair and Hisham son of Urwa, none of the Tabieen or Taba Tabieen reported anything about the child marriage of Sayyida Aishah. Urwa b. Zubair, a Tabiee did not confide this news to anyone else than Hisham who came at tenth number of the chronological order of the birth of 17 offspring of Urwa. Hisham too did not disclose this secret to anyone of his disciples at Medina including Imam Malik b. Anas during first 73 years of his living at Medina. Even subsequently, he never disclosed this news to anyone at Makkah, Medina or any other part of Hijaz. It was after the first 73 years of his life that Hisham started visiting Iraq to seek financial help from the caliphs at Baghdad. During the last visit to Kufah in about 145 AH he reportedly revealed this news to his eight disciples at Kufah. By that time, Hisham had already lost his senses, memory and eyesight. No one among his disciples publicized this news before 185 AH. Ali b. Mus'hir had been the first one to give it wide publicity during 185-189 i.e. during last 4 years of his life after suffering from blindness of about 12 years, loss of temper and mental order.

In addition to Hisham, we also find one narrative in Sahih Muslim where Zuhri reports from Urwa b. Zubair. Scholars, however, hold that Zuhri had neither seen nor heard anything from Urwa b. Zubayr. They, therefore, assign no credibility to his narrative from Urwa b. Zubayr. The Hadith had not been known to believers at Medina, Makkah or Hijaz before the 2nd half of the 3rd century AH. It, therefore, can be taken as a later product ascribed to Hisham b. Urwa during his stay at Kufa in 145 AH but publicized by Ali b. Mus'hir a disciple of Urwa during 185-189 AH i.e. about 40 years after the death of Hisham.

The fact is that there had been no mention of the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at a tender age before its first narration by Hisham son of Urwa in 145 at Kufah and its subsequent publication during 185 to 189. Later on incorporation of such reports in Sihah Khamsa lent lot of credibility to these so called Ahadith. There are, however, many reasons to doubt veracity of these Ahadith as shall be discussed subsequently. We, however, know that before Musnad Imam Ahmed compiled

up to 241 AH, no other collection of Ahadith had reported anything about the tender-aged marriage of Sayyida Aishah. The consummation of her marriage at the age of 9 years, however, gained wide circulation through the collections of Ahadith known as *Sihah Sittah* during 232-302 AH. Usually, Sunni Muslims attach presumption of truth to these books. There are, however, different other Ahadith, historical reports and other reasons which must be taken into view before passing any final verdict about the age of Aysha at the time of the consummation of her marriage.

There had been many of the great Muhadditheen among the Taba Tabieen at Medina including Imam Malik b. Anas (80-179 AH) who had taken about 40 years to compile his Hadith collection known as Muatta Imam Malik. He presented the said collection of Ahadith to 70 jurists of Medina who endorsed accuracy of the same. Due to his eminence in the evaluation of Ahadith, he was known as the **Ameer al-Mumineen fi-al-Hadith**. Besides this, he also enjoyed great respect among the believers due to serving as Imam of Ahl-e-Medina for a long time. Except for visiting Makkah for Hajj, Imam Malik always preferred to stay at Medina devoting himself entirely to gain more and more knowledge about the Qur'an and the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to transmit the same to a large number of his disciples. Although he died at Medina in 179 AH yet he or his contemporaries had no knowledge that the marriage of Sayyida Aysha had been consumed at the age of 9 lunar years. **Had there been any truth in the report, the people of Medina must have been aware of the same.**

With the only exception of certain Ahadith in Sihah Khamsa attributed Sayyida Aishah no one among the afore-stated Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ has reported anything about the age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of the consummation of her marriage. Similarly, we also receive no report from any Tabii except Urwa b. Zubair reporting from Sayyida Aishah. Among the Tabieen, Imam Mālik b. Anas b. Mālik b. Abī Āmir (93-179 AH) might have enjoyed the longest time of teaching and leading the prayers in Masjid-e-Nabvi at Madina after the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In spite of spending his whole life at Medina with his primary

occupation as reporter of Ahadith from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he did not make any reference to the life of Ayesha at the time of the consummation of her marriage in his collection of Ahadith known as *Muatta* Imam Malik.

Scholars from Makkha also knew nothing about the premature Nikah or consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah. They include:

	Names	Birth/Death
1	Abdullah b. Abbas b. Abdul Mutlib	11 Nbvi 68 AH
2	Mujahid b. Jubayr	d. 103 AH
3	Ikrama Maula ibn Abbas	d. 107 AH
4	Ata b. Abi Rabah	33-114 AH
5	Abu Zubayr Muhammad b. Muslim	d. 157 AH

The afore-stated lists have been taken from the book *Tareekh-e-Fiqh-e-Islami* (Urdu).²⁷³

Ashab-e-Suffa

After the Hegira the Holy Prophet ﷺ had founded صفه i.e. Suffah meaning the Bench or a sheltered space to accommodate poor, homeless and unmarried Muhajireen to learn the Qur'an and Sunnah and other arts. They were known as "Ashab-al-Suffah", which can be translated as "Suffah Fraternity". The Holy Prophet ﷺ used to sit with them, chat together, and used to call them to his food, sharing together his drinks, so they were counted among his dependents. Some of the Sahabah also used to take two or three of Ashab al-Suffah to feed them at home. It is estimated that at times Suffah held up to 300-400 people while their number used to increase and decrease up to the time when the Muslims had conquered various lands and most of them had become rich.

The Suffah adjoined the houses of the Holy Prophet ﷺ on one side and Masjid-e-Nabvi on the other. Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah had been perhaps the most prominent member of this fraternity since his conversion to Islam during 7th AH to sometime after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He was

²⁷³ *Tareekh-e-Fiqh-e-Islami* Urdu translationi of the Arabic original written by Allama Shykh Khudri Bakk of Egypt, (Karachi: Darul-Ishaat, opposite Maulvi Musafir Khana, 1979), p. 211-219.

not only gifted with sharp memory but also knew the language of Persians and the Abbysinians who ruled Yemen. During his stay at Suffah, Abu Hurayra devoted his entire time to learn and remember the Ahadith either directly from the Holy Prophet ﷺ or some of his prominent companions. This is why he tops the list of Mukassirin i.e. those who had reported the maximum number of Ahadith from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was at Suffah that Abdullah b. Said b. Aas started teaching the people how to read and write. Similarly, teaching about reading and writing had also started at eight other places at Medina. This led to increasing the number of literate people in the community. In spite of all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to rely more upon the sharp memory of the Arabian people to transmit the message of the Lord orally to other places in Arabia and its surroundings. Meanwhile, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also took great care to dictate each and every revelation to his amanuenses for keeping written record of the same.

During the earlier phase of his missionary period, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had advised his followers not to keep a written record of anything except the Qur'an. It has been reported that:

حدثنا حذاب بن خالد الأزدي، حدثنا همام عن زيد بن اسلم، عن عطاء بن يسار، عن أبي سعيد الخدري، أن رسول الله ﷺ قال: لا تكتبوا عني غير القرآن و من كتب عني غير القرآن فليمح و حدثوا عني و لا حرج- و من كذب على (---) متعمدا فليتيو مقعده من النار-

Abu Said Khudri reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Do not take down anything from me, and he who took down anything from me except the Qur'an, he should efface that and narrate from me, for there is no harm in it and he who attributed any falsehood to me (...) deliberately should in fact find his abode in the Hell.²⁷⁴

²⁷⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, eng. Tr. by Mahmud Matraji vol. IV-B, (Karachi: Dar-ul-Ishaat, 1998), Hadith No. 2004, p. 773.

The author of *Uloom-ul-Hadith* also mentioned the names of Sayyidina Abu Hurayrah, Abdullah b. Abbas, Abdullah b. Umar and Zaid b. Thabit among those who narrate about the prohibition of keeping a written record of Ahadith. The scholars, however, believe that such prohibitions pertained only to the first few years after Hegira so that the words of the Qur'an may not get confused with the sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The companions of the Prophet ﷺ had such devotion for Islam that many of them had learnt by heart almost the entire Qur'an revealed up to then. Those who could not afford it had memorized certain parts of the Qur'an for recitation during their prayers or during other times to worship the Lord.

Although due to the fear of confusion of his own words with the Qur'an, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had not been allowing to keep written record of his own words and interpretations of the Qur'an during major parts of his missionary life yet during last few years he permitted certain astute writers to record each and everything said or done by him. This was so because the prophet ﷺ had the consolation that thousands and thousands of his companions had memorized almost entire Qur'an revealed up to then. Since the word of God had become distinct from any human words, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ granted permission to certain persons including Abdullah b. Amr b. al-Aas to record the Ahadith. Besides reading and writing Arabic, Abdullah b. Amr b. al-Aas could also read and understand the scriptures of the Jews and the Christians in Syriac language. It is, therefore, narrated that many people had recorded the Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ even during the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Abdullah b. Amr b. al-Aas (d. 65 AH), Saad b. Ubada (d. 17 AH), Jabir b. Abdulah (d. 78 AH), Abdullah b. Abbas (d. 68 AH) and Sahaif of Abu Hurayra (d. 58 AH) through Hammam b. Munabbah, Kulthum and through Abd-ur-Razzaq can be counted among them. Many other companions also left their Sahaaf for benefit of their successors. Some of them were:

- 1) Saheefa of Anas through Humaid at-Taweel and another through Khirash
- 2) Saheefa-e-Ali through his family
- 3) Saheefa of Jaafar ibn Nastoore al-Rumi
- 4) Saheefa of ibn Umar through Abdurrazzaq and another through Juwairya bint ibn Asma

The Collective Traditions of Sahaba:

We know that after the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ the collective traditions of Sahaba are the third important source for guidance of the believers. Since we neither find any permission in the Qur'an nor in the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for consummation of marriage before Bulooḡh, therefore, the 3rd source in priority could be the traditions of the Sahaba about whom the Almighty had proclaimed that:

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors.²⁷⁵

Let us admit that in spite of our search for instances of child marriage or consummation thereof in early Islam, we have failed to find any credible evidence for the same not merely among the Sahaba but also among the Tabieen and their successors up to the end of third century AH. **The total non-existence of the child abuse among the earliest Muslim society even under the pretext of marriage can, therefore, be taken as a poof of fabrication of the Hadith at Kufa about 135 years after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.** Even otherwise, the report being Khabar-e-Wahid and contradicting many other Ahadith loses its credibility among the jurists. Besides this, the narrative about the consummation of marriage at tender age not only conflicts with reason but also with historical facts and general image of the society during the genesis of Islam. We, therefore, conclude that the consummation of marriage before Bulooḡh (age of puberty) had neither been the tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor the traditions of the first five generations of his followers. This was the reason that none of the Islamic jurists had allowed consummation of

²⁷⁵ Al-Qur'an 3:110 Yousuf Ali.

marriage before attainment of 15 years or Buloogh of the spouses.

Collection of Ahadith by the Jurists

The four prominent jurists of mainstream Islam had themselves been great scholars of Qur'an and collectors of Ahadith. The collection of Ahadith by Imam Abu Hanifa (80-150 AH) is popularly known as *Musnad Imam-e-Azam*. Similarly, the compilation of Ahadith by Imam Malik (93-179 AH) is known as *Al-Muatta Imam Malik*. The third Imam of Fiqh was Muhammad b. Idrees al-Shafie (150-204 AH) whose collection of Ahadith is named *Musnad al-Shafie*. Lastly a great collection of Ahadith covering about ten volumes was prepared by Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (164-241 AH) which is known as *Musnad-e-Ahmad*. It was on the basis of Ahadith collected by them that collections of Ahadith known as *Sihah Sittah* started compilation with effect from 232 and their works stood completed by 302 AH.

The majority of the Muslims accept Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafii and Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal as the leaders of the four greatest schools of Islamic jurisprudence. As regards Buloogh, they did not omit to determine it even for those women who do not get menstruation up to and beyond 15 years. Imam Abu Hanifa suggested Buloogh at the age of 18 years for men and 17 years for women. Similarly, Imam Malik opined full Buloogh of both sexes at 18 years.²⁷⁶ Although the Shafites and the Hanbalis believe in the possibilities of earlier puberty of both sexes yet they do not decree full Buloogh before the attainment of 15 years.

Islamic Jurisprudence Precedes Compilation of Sihah Sittah

It is worth noting here that the Muslim Ummah had taken utmost care to preserve and act upon the Law of the Lord. It was for this reason that they attached primary

²⁷⁶ For detailed reference please see Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 292-293.

importance to the law i.e. the precepts of the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ than even to his life events and history of the Islamic movement. This is also evident from the fact that Islamic jurisprudence preceded the compilation of *Sihah Sittah*. Imam Ahmed had been the last jurist among the four great Aimmah of Sunni School of thought who died in 241 AH.²⁷⁷ As compared to them, *Sahih Bukhari* had been compiled provisionally by 232 AH but work on the same continued till the death of Imam Bukhari in 256 AH. The last book among the Sihah Sittah had been *Sunan-e-Nisai* completed in 302 AH. On the average, therefore, collection of Sihah stood completed about 60 years later than the completion of the Islamic jurisprudence by the Imams mentioned above. For ready reference we are providing list of great scholars of Fiqh in the following:

	Name	Birth	Death
1	Imam Jafar Sadiq	83/Medina	148/Medina
2	Imam Abu Hanifa	80/Kufa	150/Baghdad
3	Imam Malik	93/Medina	179/ Medina
4	Sufyan Thauri	100/Kufa	161/Basra
5	Sufyan bin Uyayna	107/Kufa	198/Makkah
6	Imam Shafi	150/Gaza, Sham	205/Egypt
7	Ahmad b. Hanbal	164/Baghdad	241/Baghdad

These jurists also seem to have known nothing about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah.

Although Imam Ahmed had incorporated Hadith No. 26288 in his *Musnad* yet according to many scholars, the phrases ((وانا يومئذ ابنة تسع سنين)) and ((وانا يومئذ ابنة ست سنين)) might have been a later insersion or addition in the text. The observation seems to be correct because **Imam Ahmed himself had not pronounced Bulooqh before 15 years of age**. Had he known anything about the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 lunar years it would have been impossible for him to insist on 15 years for Bulooqh. It is also said that Imam Shafie (150-204 AH) had spoken of this Hadith in the chapter of Al-Nikah in his

²⁷⁷ For detailed reference please see Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah*, p. 291-295.

*Kitab-ul-Umm*²⁷⁸ but he too did not decree Bulooḡ for marriage before 15 years. In case he knew the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ about the consummation of marriage of Sayyida Aishah at 9 years, he could not have dared to declare Bulooḡ at 15 years. This shows that either the tradition attributed to Hisham b. Urwa was unknown to the four great jurists of Islam or they did not find it credible due to its non-adoption by the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and their followers. The Hadith seems to have been discarded by the jurists of all times due to its later origin at Kufah as against its entire non-existence among the Sahaba and the Believers at Makkah, Medina and Hijaz. Hence, in spite of the incorporation of certain narratives about the age of Sayyida Aishah in Sihah Khamsah, the report had no impact on Islamic jurisprudence till the death of the last great jurist, Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal i.e. in 241 AH.

Imam Abu Yousuf (113/117-181 AH) the most eminent disciple of Imam Abu Hanifa authored *Usul-al-Fiqah* and *Kitab al-Aathar*. Similarly, another great disciple of Imam Abu Hanifa i.e. Muhammad bin Hasan al-Shaybani (132-189 AH) compiled collection of Ahadith named *Muatta Imam Muhammad*. They also seem to have known nothing about the age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of the consummation of her marriage. None of the great scholars and successors of the afore-mentioned jurists agreed to the Bulooḡ of women before 15 years of age. As such, in spite of the fact that five out of six collectors of Sihah Sittah had followed each other to include the Hadith suggesting child-marriage of Sayyida Aysha into their collections yet it had no impact on the jurisprudence of Islam due to which **Muslims did not iduldge into the practice of child abuse anywhere in the world.** This was so because the Hadith attributed to Sayyida Aysha, Urwa and Hisham did not receive popular acceptance of the people for its implementation in the Islamic law.

The consensus of the jurists about 15 years for Bulooḡ may also have occurred due to the tradition that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not allow the young men of 14 years each to join in the battles like Badr, Uhud and Ahzab. It is on record that Abdullah b. Umar, Samura b. Jundub and Zayd

²⁷⁸ For detailed reference please see Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 249.

b. Sabit were of 14 years each at the time of the battle of Uhud.²⁷⁹ The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, did not allow them to join the Muslim army. Later on during the Battle of Trench, when each of them was 15 years or more, they had been allowed to take part in the Ghazwa. Ibn-e-Saad has reported that Sayyidina Umar had preferred Sayyida Aishah over all other wives of the Prophet ﷺ due to her joining the battle of Badr. While other Ummahat-ul-Mumineen were granted ten thousand Dirhams as, Sayyida Aishah had been sanctioned annuity of twelve thousand Dirham per year.²⁸⁰ A Hadith of Sahih Muslim also proves Sayyida Aishah's joining the battle of Badr.

It has been narrated on the authority of A'isha, wife of the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him), who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ set out for Badr. When he reached Harrat-ul-Wabara (a place four miles from Medina) a man met him who was known for his valour and courage. The Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were pleased to see him. He said: I have come so that I may follow you and get a share from the booty. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him : Do you believe in Allah and His Apostle ? He said: No. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Go back, I will not seek help from a Mushrik (polytheist). He went on until we reached Shajara, where the man met him again. He asked him the same question again and the man gave him the same answer. He said : Go back. I will not seek help from a Mushrik. The man returned and overtook him at Baida'? He asked him as he had asked previously: Do you believe in Allah and His Apostle? The man said: Yes. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to him: Then come along with us.²⁸¹

The English translation quoted above does not contain the detail of isnad of the Hadith. For the benefit of the readers, we find it necessary to quote its Isnad from the Arabic version in the following:

150- (1817) حدثني زهير بن حرب. حدثنا عبد الرحمن بن مهدي عن مالك. وحدثنيه

²⁷⁹ See footnote of Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 561.

²⁸⁰ Tabaqat Ibn-e-Saad (Urdu), Vol. 3, p. 91.

²⁸¹ *Sahih Muslim*, Chapter 50 : Book 19, Hadith Number 4472:

أبو الطاهر (واللفظ له). حدثني عبدالله بن وهب عن مالك بن أنس، عن الفضيل بن أبي
عبدالله، عن عبدالله بن نيار الأسلمي، عن عروة بن الزبير، عن عائشة زوج النبي صلى
الله عليه وسلم؛ أنها قالت.....

It is evident from the above that Urwa b. Zubair had narrated the Hadith depicting Sayyida Aishah as an eye witness of the battle of Badr. This Hadith also resolves the issue of the year of her joining with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Almost all the Muhaddithin and the historians agree that Sayyida Aishah's Nikah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been solemnized at Makkah during the month of **Shawwal** to annul the prohibition of Jahiliyyah not to marry during that month. They unanimously report that the marriage of Sayyida Aishah had been consumed during the month of **Shawwal** at Medina. The historians, however, differ on the account whether it was **Shawwal** of 1 AH or 2 AH. Since there could be no likelihood of Sayyida Aishah's companionship with the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the battle of Badr before consummation of her marriage, it is certain that her marriage must have been consummated during Shawwal of 1 AH i.e. about 11 months earlier than the battle of Badr on 17th of Ramadhan 2 AH. She might have, therefore, been the only woman to go to the battle field of Badr. There being no other instance of unmarried girls joining the fighting force we cannot assume that she had either been a tender aged girl or a virgin till then.

It is also worth noting here that war is not a pleasure trip that could be joined by anyone just for enjoyment. During the exodus the Almighty had advised Moses (عليه السلام) to prepare a list of persons "From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel" (Num 1:3). The list consisted of only able-bodied men excluding all the women from it. Keeping in view the terrors of the combats, therefore, no men or women of tender age could be allowed to join the battles of Badr, Uhud and Ahzab. In spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was obliged to defend the Islamic community with the maximum possible power at his disposal yet he did not allow males of 14 years to join the battle. Referring to Waqidi, Abu Jaafar Muhammad bin Jarir Tabri provides us with a list of young men who had not been allowed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to join the battle of Badr due to being underage or minors. They included

Abdullah bin Umar, Rafe bin Khadij, Braa bin Aazib, Zaid bin Thabit, Usaid bin Zaheer. Later on the Holy Prophet ﷺ had allowed only Ubaid b. Abi Waqas to join the army and he stood martyred during the battle.²⁸² We, therefore, find no likelihood of Sayyida Aisha's joining the Battle of Badr unless and until she was a married woman of at least 15 years at the time. This is also evident from the following:

Narrated Ibn 'Umar: Allah's Apostle called me to present myself in front of him on the eve of the battle of Uhud, while I was fourteen years of age at that time, and he did not allow me to take part in that battle, but he called me in front of him on the eve of the battle of the Trench when I was fifteen years old, and he allowed me (to join the battle).".²⁸³

From the above and many other examples it stands established that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not allow anyone to join the battle unless he was 15 years or more. The age of Ayshah during the battles of Badr and Uhud must have been beyond 15 years and most probably 19 or 20 years as can also be assessed from other reports about her age.

Sayyida Aishah might have performed different strenuous assignments during the Battle of Badr in Ramadhan 2 AH. These included lifting and treating the badly injured Sahaba, and carrying heavy water-skin bags for the Muslim armies in the manner we find reported about certain women during the battle of Uhud i.e. a year after the battle of Badr in 3 AH. *Sahih Bukhari* records that:

Narrated by Anas: On the day (of the battle) of Uhud when (some) people retreated and left the Prophet, I saw 'Aysha bint Abu Bakr and Um Sulaim, with their robes tucked up so that the bangles around their ankles were visible hurrying with their water skins (in another narration it is said, "carrying the water skins on their backs"). Then they would pour the water in the mouths of the people, and return to fill the water skins again and came back again to pour water in the mouths of the

²⁸² Ibn Jareer, *Tareekh-ul-Umam wa al-Mulook*, Vol. II (Urdu), (Karachi: Daar-ul-Ishaat, Urdu Bazar, 2003), p. 192-193.

²⁸³ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 3, Book 48, Hadith Number 832.

people.²⁸⁴

The Battle of Uhud was fought on 7th of Shawwal 3 AH. Had Sayyida Aishah joined the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the age of 9 lunar years in Shawal 1st or 2nd Hijri, she could hardly be of 10 or 11 lunar years at the time of the Battle of Uhud. No sagacious person can conceive of a lean and thin female of 10/11 years to be strong enough to carry heavy load of a goat skin full of water to pour the same in the mouths of the wounded participants of the Battle. Needless to point out that the women joining the army in the battles were usually armed with daggers etc. to ward off the enemy approaching them. The same transpires from a report of Ibn-e-Saad as translated by us in the following:

Abu Usama Hammad bin Usama reported from Umm-e-Awn from Muhammad that Umm-e-Sulaim accompanied the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the battle of Uhud and she was armed with a dagger.²⁸⁵

It has also been stated that Umm-e-Ammara R.A. (Naseeba bint Kaab b. Amr b. Aowf b. Mabzool) had joined the battle of Uhud and continued to carry skins full of water to quench the thirst of the fighters and the injured persons. Suddenly, the battle turned to the worse for the Muslims and she took up the arms to defend the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Besides killing some of the assailants, she also caused injuries to many other enemies of Islam. She, as such, sustained 13 injuries on her body while defending the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, got her treated under his own supervision.²⁸⁶

Aysha might, therefore, have been in her prime youth to carry the water-skin full of water which was impossible for a girl of about 10 or 11 years as should have been the case if she had joined the Holy Prophet ﷺ almost a year before the Battle of Uhud. She must, therefore, have been of full age by that time. On observing Bishr bin Aqraba weeping for the death of his father in the battle, the Holy Prophet

²⁸⁴ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 4, Book 52, Hadith Number 131.

²⁸⁵ *Tabaqaat Ibn-e-Saad*, Tr. in Urdu by Allama Abdullah al-Ammadi, (Deoband: Hafiz Book Depot 247554, U.P.), Vol. 8, p. 452.

²⁸⁶ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqi*, p. 563.

ﷺ proclaimed that “*would you not like that I should be your father and Aishah your mother?*”²⁸⁷ The proposal could be apposite only if Aishah had a mother-like age and appearance for Bishir bin Aqraba. Alternatively if Sayyida Aishah seemed to be of 10 or 11 years, the Prophet ﷺ would not have suggested her as adoptive mother of Bishr who himself might have been at least of 5 or 6 years. Keeping in view the rejection of 14 years old men by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to join the battle of Uhud, therefore, **we can take the joining of Sayyida Aysha in the battle of Badr as an irrefutable proof of her full maturity at that time.** The sanction of annuity as a Badri Sahabia must have been known to all the Sahaba living at that time. Since no one raised any objection against the annuity granted to Sayyida Aishah, therefore, we can take it as an **Ijmaa of Sahaba that she must have been of 15 years or more at that time.** As such, the Hadith describing consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at 9 years attributed to Hisham b. Urwa stands refuted by Ijmaa of Sahaba living during the time of Sayyidina Umar (RA).

Scandalization of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

As stated earlier the Ghali Shiites of Kufah had the intention of showing immaturity, shallowness of knowledge and lack of sound judgment of Sayyida Aishah as compared to Sayyidina Ali. They, therefore, tried to support and circulate any report denigrating Sayyida Aishah. No one took the notice that instead of maligning Sayyida Aishah, the consummation of her marriage at the age of 9 lunar years could prove much more scandalous against Islam and the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Sihah Sittah had reached finalization by 302 AH and the Jews as well as the western Christendom took no notice of the afore-stated collections of Ahadith. It was perhaps a debate among the Muslims themselves during the first quarter of the 20th century that the Western writers gained a point to present the reports in Sihah Sittah as scriptures of Islam and to assert for the first time that

²⁸⁷ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 563.

the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a habitual child molestor or a paedophile. They have, therefore, taken undue advantage of these reports to ridicule Islam and to scandalize the most exalted moral excellence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Sayyida Aishah, therefore, serves just as a victim in the game. The Prophet ﷺ at the age of 53/54 years is presented as an aggressor or molestor of children. Most of these allegations take support from the Ahadith primarily attributed to Hisham b. Urwa revealed for the first time at Kufah in 145 AH. Hisham had narrated about the event on the authority of his father who heard it directly from Sayyida Aishah. Due to non-existence of the Hadith at Makkah, Medina or any other centre of Islam except Kufah before 145 AH, its confliction with the guidance from the Quran and its being Khabar-e-Wahid we had already given our reasons to deny it as unreliable. Before further discussion on the Ahadith, it may be useful to start from the translation of a sample Hadith from Sahih Muslim as representative of prime contents of other Ahadith on the subject:

Aishah (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) **married her when she was seven years old**, and **she was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine**, and her dolls were with her; and **when he (the Holy Prophet ﷺ) died she was eighteen years old.**²⁸⁸

The critics, therefore, observe the consummation of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ marriage with a tender aged girl of 9 lunar years as sexual abuse of a minor under the pretext of marriage. They allege that the Prophet ﷺ was sexually attracted to prepubescent or peripubescent children. Some of them went further to write articles titled '*Muhammad fits the Clinical Definition of Paedophile*', '*Necrophilia in Islam*' or '*Qur'an Explicitly Condone Paedophilia*'. Others contend that paedophilia is permitted in the Qur'an. The enemies of Islam, therefore, denigrate the Prophet ﷺ by labeling

²⁸⁸ *Sahih Muslim* Book 8, Hadith No. 3311 (Web Eng. Reference). The Isnaad of this report contains names such as Aswad, Aamash, Ibrahim, Abu Muavia, Ishaaq, Yahya etc. We have, therefore, given our reasons for non-reliance in the report based on our reasons for rejecting them.

"*Muhammad a Demon Possessed Paedophile*. Some of them go still further to suggest psychological disease by asserting that "*Muhammad Himself Believed He Was Under Demonic Influence*". Critics also argue that paedophilia had been practised not only by the Prophet ﷺ himself but also many of his companions.²⁸⁹ The western writers, therefore, try to paint a distorted picture of Islam and its founder by describing marriage of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with sayyida Aishah under the title "*The Life of Aishah Bint Abu Bakr Was a 7th Century Tragedy*".²⁹⁰

The Fitna of prepubescent consumption of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah originating from Kufah during 145-189 had been exploited to such an extent that certain articles have been written to claim that Sayyida Aishah had not got her menstrual periods up to her journey for Hajj in 10th AH. Keeping in view the historical facts, we reject the said observation as a mere non-sense of certain opponents of Sayyida Aishah. In the forthcoming part of the book, therefore, we have attempted to refute all such false observations of the critics on the basis of sound reasoning pointing out incredibility of the same.

²⁸⁹ Such assertions are based on doubtful writings pertaining to later periods. One of the sources had been *Tareekh-e-Khamees* published in Cairo in 1884. For details please see Wikipedia, s.v. '*Tareekh-e-Khamees*'.

²⁹⁰ We firmly hold that the marriage of Sayyida Aishah had occurred exactly in accordance with the norms of the society and no oddity about the event has been reported by the five earliest generations of the believers. The writer, however, has picked up some threads from the Ahadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah to weave different counterplots to tarnish the image of the luminous and the most blessed mother of the believers. We may, however, point out that the prophets of the Lord live under constant guidance and watch of the Almighty who does not allow them to deviate from the highest standard of morality at any time during their lives. No prophet could ever indulge into child abuse because the Almighty could not allow them to molest the minors (Al-Qur'an 2:226). The Qur'an had also guided the Holy Prophet ﷺ (Al-Qur'an) which is usually translated as "what is considered good". Child abuse is also impossible in the face of the divine direction that the Almighty does not put anyone into hardship (Al-Qur'an 22:78). Sayyida Aishah, therefore, had no tragedy to suffer as alleged by the writer.

We already observed that the non-believers and religious perverts have always been fabricating the allegations or misconstruing the Holy Scriptures to ridicule, defame and deny the holiness and truth of the prophets of the Lord. The Jews and the Christians had been trying to falsify the teachings of Islam by making the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and teachings of Islam as the target of bitter criticism.

For this, they spared no efforts even to pervert the facts or to fabricate different calumnies to spoil or disfigure the most exalted moral conduct of the final Prophet of the Lord ﷺ, his ancestors, companions and the followers. He had been targetted not only by the non-believers or Munafiqoon among the Arabs but also by the People of Book during all periods of time. The general trend of such people is to magnify or exaggerate even the apparently false or fake reports as an established truth. Any efforts to convince such people, therefore, can be taken as an exercise in futility. Our analysis of the facts or an attempt to separate the chaff from the grain can, therefore, be useful for the lovers of the truth. It was to the said purpose that we tried to present facts which strongly rebut the allegations of child abuse (paedophilia) against the Prophet of Islam ﷺ.

Actually instead of allowing or condoning paedophilia, Islam has taken effective measures to emancipate tender-aged women from all types of exploitation, molestation, coercion, dispossession or other tragedies whatsoever. Islam, therefore, refers to the term Buloogh-al-Nikah as a familiar or well-known fact to determine appropriateness of the age for delivering assets of the orphans to them. A religion taking utmost care for the property of the orphans cannot be expected to ignore the physical abuse or exploitation of the minors under any pretext whatsoever.

Muslims have firm faith in the verdict of the Almighty about his final prophet ﷺ certifying that:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

And Thou (standest) on an Exalted standard of character.²⁹¹

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ and the first five generations of Muslims up to the end of the 2nd century

²⁹¹ Al-Qur'an 68:4 Yousuf Ali.

Hegira, therefore, continued to imitate strictly the highest standard of character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as per commandment of the Lord in the following:

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah **a beautiful pattern (of conduct)**. (Al-Qur'an 33:21).

Believers never found anything below the mark in the sublime pattern of life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. No one among them knew about the slander of the child abuse by the Holy Prophet ﷺ as seems to have been attributed to Hisham b. Urwa at Kufah primarily during 144-146 AH by Ali b. Mus'hir and others in about 185 AH. Even so it received no publicity among the masses. It was with the incorporation of certain Ahadith about the age of Sayyida Aysha in the *Sihah Sittah* (compiled during 232-302 AH), that many of the true believers had been led to rely on the report. It is, therefore, apparent from the above that the news originating at Kufa had its wide publication through *Sihah Sittah* only in the 2nd half of the 3rd century AH. Although its entry into *Sihah Sittah* gave credence to it in certain parts of the Islamic world yet it had no impact on the Islamic jurisprudence and practice of the Muslim society. Presently, only the enemies of Islam are taking advantage of the report to decry the the last and the final prophet of the Lord. Some of them allege that Muhammad ﷺ fits the clinical definition of a paedophile which is absolutely incorrect.

Collection of Ahadith:

We said earlier that the Prophet ﷺ always precedes the scriptures containing revelations from the Lord. It is, therefore, through him that the message of the Lord is conveyed to the people while the Prophet ﷺ himself serves as the only authentic interpreter of the same. Besides this, the Prophet ﷺ also provides the practical demonstration by implementing the commandments of the Lord in his own life to be imitated by his followers. The Holy

Prophet ﷺ was an unlettered man who did not read or write a book with his own hand. With the exception of only 17 persons at Makkah,²⁹² the community consisted of illiterate persons gifted specially by the Almighty to remember accurately the words heard by them. It was, therefore, primarily through oral transmission that the message of the Lord stood proliferated throughout the Arabian Peninsula.

Background of the Fake Ahadith

It is worth noting here that some of the Shia Muhaddithin especially from Kufah, Basrah and Baghdad in Iraq kept themselves concealed under the title of Ahl-u-Sunnah wa Al-Jamaa. Besides fabrication of Ahadith, some of them used to insert their own words in different Ahadith to establish superiority and virtue of Sayyidina Ali over Sayyidina Abu Bakr, Umar, Usman and Aishah. Hence, all Ahadith containing such a trend stand rejected by the Ahl-e-Sunnah wal Jamaa. In the present case, we find that there are certain Ahadith aiming at showing Sayyida Aisha as a playful girl of younger age who could not be taken as a mature thinker or prominent scholar of Qur'an, Ahadith and jurisprudence of Islam. Ahl-e-Sunnah wal-Jamaat, therefore, accord no credibility to Ahadith degrading or criticizing any of the Sahaba and the nobilities mentioned above. The amalgamation of the true reports with the forged one had, however, created a great problem for the Muhaddithin. They had to take utmost care to sever the fake from the true.

Compilation of Sihah Sittah

By the end of 2nd century AH, there existed hundreds of collections of Hadith from prominent scholars containing large or small numbers of Ahadith at various centers of Islam. The Muhaddithin, therefore, came forward to prepare standard collections with the help of all the sources available to them. They were also concerned to prevent any future mixture of the bogus reports with the true and

²⁹² Dr. Subhi Saleh Labnani, *Uloom-ul-Hadeeth* (Urdu) p. 30.

authentic reports from the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The specialists of Ahadith had to travel throughout the Islamic centres in the world to collect the Ahadith from different scholars and to scrutinize the same along with their Isnad critically so that standard and codified collections may be prepared for the benefit of the believers.

It was, therefore, an extremely laborious and painstaking task to evaluate each and every Hadith received by them along with the maximum information about the life events, characteristics and credibility of the narrators and to examine the time period, sources and integrity of various Muhaddithin. Initially, they insisted to record each and every Hadith along with its chain of narrators. A large number of Ahadith was collected by them from different Islamic centres which also included the Ahadith containing exactly the same words but with different chains of narrators, so much so that some of the Ahadith with the same contents had been received from 60 or more sources. After critically examining each and every Hadith, the collector preferred to report it only from the source that seemed to bear the best or the most credible Isnad i.e. chain of reporters. During codification, however, the Muhaddithin had to repeat certain Ahadith under two or three different codes. All other reports were held as a supporting evidence or personal record of the traditionist. The net result had been preparation of various collections out of which the following received the greatest appreciation from the scholars:

List of Great Collectors/ compilers of Hadith:

	Name	Date/Place of Birth	Date/Place of Death	No. of Ahadith included in his collection
1	Imam Malik	93/Medina	179/ Medina	1900
2	Imam Bukhari	194/Bukhara	256/ Samarkand	7397
3	Imam Muslim	200/ Neshapur	261/ Neshapur	4000
4	Abu Dawud	202/Sistan	275-6/Sistan	4800
5	Ibn Majah	209/Qazvin	274/Qazwin	Over 4000
6	Imam Tirmidhi	209/ Uzbukistan	279/Termez	3956

7	Imam Nasai	Nasa, Turkmenistan /241	Ramla or Makkah/302	5270
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The Sunnis claiming themselves to be representing mainstream Islam include collections of Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Imam Abu Dawood, Ibn-e-Maja, Imam Tirmidhi and Imam Nasai mentioned from No. 2 to 7 above among *Sihah Sittah*. Although Imam Malik, mentioned at No. 1 above had been considered as one of the most reliable narrators of Ahadith yet large number of scholars have preferred Ibn-e-Maja over Muwattah Imam Malik due to the fact that Imam Malik had not given Isnaad with a substantial number of Ahadith collected by him. On the other hand, the Malikis and especially Ibn-e-Athir give priority to Muwattah Imam Malik over the collection of Ibn Majah and argue that almost all the Ahadith of Muattah have been included in other books of Sihah and no Hadith of Muattah has been discarded by the Muhaddithin. It was, however, due to the Isnad that the traditionists included Ibn-e-Majah in the Sihah which also include Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abu Dawud, Sunan-e-Tirmidhi and Sunan-Imam Nasai. Imam Bukhari was the first one of the collectors of Ahadith who is said to have provisionally compiled Sahih Bukhari in about 232 AH. Other scholars, however, believe that he continued to scrutinize and improve his collection up to his death i.e. in 256 AH. The compilation of Sihah, however, ended in 302 AH with the death of Imam Nasai. As such, this 70 years period i.e. between 256 and 302 AH can be called the **Era of Muhaddithin**.

It is worth noting here that the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had been the only community in the world who had taken utmost care to preserve each and every word spoken by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in its original language, words and phrases. Thousands and thousands of scholars devoted their entire lives for the purpose. Consequently, they have recorded the names along with characteristics of **more than five hundred thousand narrators as contained in Asmaa-ur-Rijal** spreading over more than thirty voluminous books.

As regards the Hadith about the age of Sayyida Aysha at the time of the consummation of her marriage, Imam Bukhari had been the first one to include it in Sahih Bukhari

sometime during 232 and 256 AH. He enjoyed such veneration among his contemporaries, disciples and successors that they considered his collection as the most credible book after the Holy Qur'an. We, however, hold that Imam Bukhari was a human being and in spite of his great integrity, and extensive efforts to purify his collection from any spurious material, he claimed no infallibility or immunity from errors. This was the reason that instead of following him blindly, the succeeding Muhadithin had been reviewing his collection critically up to the present times. It is, therefore, said that **the critics raised certain objections about 110 out of 7110 Ahadith in Shahih Bukhari**. The percentage of doubtful Ahadith, therefore, is less than 1.5% of his collection. We also observe that certain other scholars came forward to defend the accuracy of Imam Bukhari due to which no amendment had been made in his collection.

Asakir-ud-Din Muslim bin al-Hajjaj a disciple and follower of Imam Bukhari had been the 2nd great collector of Ahadith to be included in Sihah Sittah. Following Imam Bukhari and Muslim, three other collections counted among Sihah Sittah i.e. Sunan-e-Nasai, Sunan-e-Abu Dawud, Sunan-e-Ibn Majah also included the afore-stated Hadith shown to have originated from Ayshah, Urwa or Hisham b. Urwa with different reporters from the later generations. Tirmidhi had been the only exception among the compilers of Sihah who did not include this narrative in his collection. We shall, therefore, be reverting to the criticism of such Ahadith soon hereafter.

AHADITH SUGGESTING TENDER AGE OF SAYYIDA AISHAH

Ahadith about Age of Aishah from Sihah

The Hadith quoted below represents the collective theme of the Ahadith suggesting tender age of Sayyida Aishah:

Aishah (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) **married her when she was seven years old**, and **she was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine**, and her dolls were with her; and **when he (the Holy Prophet ﷺ) died she was eighteen years old.**²⁹³

For detailed evaluation or scrutinization of the Ahadith supporting the tender age of Sayyida Aishah, we shall be quoting the same from the original sources in the following. For convenience of the readers, we have also provided the English translation of each Hadith.

Ahadith From Sahih Bukhari:

1st Report from Sahih Bukhari:

- حدثني فروة بن أبي المغراء: حدثنا علي بن مسهر، عن هشام، عن أبيه، عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت: تزوجني النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وأنا بنت ست سنين، فقدمنا المدينة، فزلنا في بني الحارث بن خزرج، فوعكت فتمزق شعري فوفى حجمة، فأنتني أي أم رومان، وإني لفي أرجوحة، ومعني صواحب لي، فصرخت بي فأتيته، لا أدري ما تريد بي فأخذت بيدي حتى أوقفني على باب الدار، وإني لأنهج حتى سكن بعض نفسي، ثم أخذت شيئاً من ماء فمسحت به وجهي ورأسي، ثم أدخلتني الدار، فإذا نسوة من الأنصار في البيت، فقلن:

²⁹³ *Sahih Muslim* Book 8, Hadith No. 3311 (Web Eng. Reference). The Isnaad of this report contains names such as Aswad, Aamash, Ibrahim, Abu Muavia, Ishaaq, Yahya etc. We have, therefore, given our reasons for non-reliance on different reports based on the shortcomings discovered in each of the Ahadith.

على الخير والبركة، وعلى خير طائر، فأسلمتني إليهن، فأصلحن من شأني، فلم يرعني إلا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ضحى، فأسلمتني إليه، وأنا يومئذ بنت تسع سنين.

Farwa bin Abi al-Mghraa told me that Ali b. Mus'hir narrated to us from Hisham from his father that Aisha narrated: The Prophet engaged me when I was a girl of six (years). We went to Medina and stayed at the home of Bani-al-Harith bin Khazraj. Then I got ill and my hair fell down. Later on my hair grew (again) and my mother, Um Ruman, came to me while I was playing in a swing with some of my girl friends. She called me, and I went to her, not knowing what she wanted to do to me. She caught me by the hand and made me stand at the door of the house. I was breathless then, and when my breathing became Allright, she took some water and rubbed my face and head with it. Then she took me into the house. There in the house I saw some Ansari women who said, "Best wishes and Allah's Blessing and a good luck." Then she entrusted me to them and they prepared me (for the marriage). Unexpectedly Allah's Apostle came to me in the forenoon and my mother handed me over to him, and at that time I was a girl of nine years of age.²⁹⁴

2nd Report from Sahih Bukhari:

حَدَّثَنِي عُيَيْدُ بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ تُوُفِّيَتْ خَدِيجَةُ قَبْلَ مَخْرَجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ بِثَلَاثِ سِنِينَ، فَلَبِثَ سَنَتَيْنِ أَوْ قَرِيبًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ، وَنَكَحَ عَائِشَةَ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ، ثُمَّ بَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ.

Narrated Hisham's Father: Khadija died three years before the Prophet (ﷺ) departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married `Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed that marriage when she was nine years old.²⁹⁵

3rd Report from Sahih Bukhari:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا - أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَزَوَّجَهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ، وَأُذْجِلَتْ عَلَيْهِ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ، وَمَكَثَتْ عِنْدَهُ تِسْعًا.

²⁹⁴ Sahih Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 234.

²⁹⁵ Sahih Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 236.

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Narrated Aisha: that the Prophet (ﷺ) married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old, and then she remained with him for nine years (i.e., till his death).²⁹⁶

4th Report from Sahih Bukhari:

حَدَّثَنَا مُعَلَّى بْنُ أَسَدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا وَهَيْبٌ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَزَوَّجَهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ، وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ. قَالَ هِشَامٌ وَأَنْبِئْتُ أَنَّهَا كَانَتْ عِنْدَهُ تِسْعَ سِنِينَ.

Narrated Aishah: that the Prophet (ﷺ) married her when she was six years old and he consummated his marriage when she was nine years old. Hisham said: I have been informed that `Aisha remained with the Prophet (ﷺ) for nine years (i.e. till his death).²⁹⁷

5th Report from Sahih Bukhari:

حَدَّثَنَا قَبِيصَةُ بْنُ عُقْبَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، تَزَوَّجَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَائِشَةَ وَهِيَ ابْنَةُ سِتِّ وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ ابْنَةُ تِسْعٍ وَمَكَثَتْ عِنْدَهُ تِسْعًا.

The Prophet (ﷺ) wrote the (marriage contract) with `Aisha while she was six years old and consummated his marriage with her while she was nine years old and she remained with him for nine years (i.e. till his death).²⁹⁸

The readers will observe that the primary chain of reporters consists of Hisham b. Urwa from Urwa from Sayyida Aishah in the reports mentioned at number 1, 3 and 4 while **the reports at number 2 and 5 start directly from Urwa without any mention of having heard the narrative from Sayyida Aishah.** As such the report at Number 2 and 5 suffer from tadlees (تدليس) or Inqitaa (انقطاع). We feel compelled to repeat here that Hisham had disclosed this news for the first time at Kufah in about 145 AH i.e. about

²⁹⁶ *Shih Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Book 62, Hadith 64.

²⁹⁷ *Shih Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Book 62, Hadith 65.

²⁹⁸ *Shih Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Book 62, Hadith 88.

a year before his death and 144 years after the event. The disclosure of the news was made so late after the death of the original reporters that it was impossible for the Muhaddithin to trace back the news to the original sources. They, therefore, had no recourse except to rely on the sources like Ali b. Mus'hir, Abdurrazzaq or Aamash and Abu Muawiah who suffered from many shortcomings about their credence, health and faith. Even other wise during the last few years of his life Hisham had been suffering from the phobia of figure 9 as discussed in detail in our chapter titled '*Prominent Figures in the Chain of Narrators*', s.v. '*Hisham b. Urwa*'. We have also reproduced different scholarly opinions about other reporter due to which we tend to reject their reports. It is also worth noting here that out of about 144000 Sahaba and a large number of Tabieen Hisham had been the only reporter about the event during a time when due to superannuation, he had already lost his eyesight, temper and mental faculties. The fact is that with the exception of the attribution of all these Ahadith to Sayyida Aishah, none out of the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ did report about the consummation of her marriage at 9 years. Even the Tabieen or Taba Tabieen knew nothing about it up to publicizing of the report by Ali b. Mus'hir during 185-189 AH²⁹⁹ when besides being extremely old, he was suffering from blindness and mental disorder. Hisham and his disciples, however, did not give any reasons for concealment of this news up to 145 AH. Even if Hisham had disclosed this news at Kufah and Basra during 145-146 AH, we find no reasons for further concealment of the news up to 185-189 AH when Ali b. Mus'hir did reveal it to his disciples during the time he was himself suffering from blindness loss of temper and memory. Ali b. Mus'hir died in 189 AH. We, therefore, cannot rely on the reports attributed to Hisham or Ali b. Mus'hir.

²⁹⁹ Many scholars mention Khalaf b. Khalifa died in 181 AH as the last one of the Tabieen who had seen the last Sahabi i.e. Abu Tufayl Amr b. Wathila at Makkah (Uloom al-Hadith (Urdu) tr. by Ghulam Ahmed Hareeri, (Lyallpur: Malak Brothers, Karkhana Bazar,), p. 453-454). According to other scholars, the last one to die among the Tabieen was Jarir bin Haazim (died 170 A.H.) Siddiqi, Muhammad (1993). *Hadith Literature* (PDF). Oxford: The Islamic Texts Society. p. 29.

It was through the successors of the disciples of Hisham at Kufah, Basra and Baghdad that Imam Bukhari came across the Ahadith and included the same in his collection known commonly as *Sahih Bukhari* which was prepared during 232-256 AH.³⁰⁰ Due to the news remaining concealed up to 185-189, its being Khabar-e-Wahid, attributed to Sayyida Aishah alone and involvement of persons like Hisham b. Urwa and Ali b. Mus'hir, reporting the news during their ill-health and extreme mental disorder, we cannot rely on these reports.

Ahadith From Sahih Muslim

Following Imam Bukhari, his disciple i.e. Muslim b. Hajjaj had also incorporated four reports about the tender-aged marriage of Sayyida Aishah from the sources contained therein. These reports were:

1st Report From Sahih Muslim:

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو كُرَيْبٍ، مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، ح وَحَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ قَالَ وَجَدْتُ فِي كِتَابِي عَنْ أَبِي أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِسِتِّ سِنِينَ وَبَنَى بِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ . قَالَتْ فَقَدِمْنَا الْمَدِينَةَ فَوَعَدْتُ شَهْرًا فَوَفَّى شَعْرِي جُمُيَةً فَأَتَنِي أُمُّ رُومَانَ وَأَنَا عَلَى أَرْجُوخَةٍ وَمَعِيَ صَوَاجِي فَصَرَخَتْ بِي فَأَتَيْتُهَا وَمَا أَذْرِي مَا تَرِيدُ بِي فَأَخَذَتْ بِيَدِي فَأَوْقَفَتْنِي عَلَى الْبَابِ . فَقُلْتُ هَهُ هَهُ . حَتَّى ذَهَبَ نَفْسِي فَأَذْخَلَنِي بَيْتًا فَإِذَا نِسْوَةٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ فَقُلْنَ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ وَالْبَرَكَةِ وَعَلَى خَيْرِ طَائِفٍ . فَأَسْلَمَتْنِي إِلَيْهِنَّ فَغَسَلْنَ رَأْسِي وَأَصْلَحَتْنِي فَلَمْ يَرَعْنِي إِلَّا وَرَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ضَعَى فَأَسْلَمَتْنِي إِلَيْهِ .

Aishah Reported that: Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) married me when I was six years old, and I was admitted to his house at the age of nine. She further said: We went to Medina and I had an attack of fever for a month, and my hair had come down to the earlobes. Umm Ruman (my mother) came to me and I was at that time on a swing along with my playmates.

³⁰⁰ For further details on Imam Bukhari's reliance on the Ahadith describing tender age of Sayyida Aishah please also refer to chapter on 'The Tender Aged Girl' *جارية حديث السن*.

She called me loudly and I went to her and I did not know what she had wanted of me. She took hold of my hand and took me to the door, and I was saying: Ha, ha (as if I was gasping), until the agitation of my heart was over. **She took me to a house, where had gathered the women of the Ansar.** They all blessed me and wished me good luck and said: May you have share in good. She (my mother) entrusted me to them. They washed my head and embellished me and nothing frightened me. Allah's Messenger (, may peace be upon him) came there **in the morning**, and I was entrusted to him.³⁰¹

2nd Report from Sahih Muslim:

وَحَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى، أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، ح وَحَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لَهُ - حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ - هُوَ ابْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ - عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَنَا بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ وَبَنَى بِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ .

Aishah Reported that: Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) married me when I was six years old, and I was admitted to his house when I was nine years old.³⁰²

3rd Report from Sahih Muslim:

وَحَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ بْنُ حُمَيْدٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَعْمَرٌ، عَنِ الزُّهْرِيِّ، عَنْ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَزَوَّجَهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ وَزَفَّتْ إِلَيْهِ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ وَلَعَبَهَا مَعَهَا وَمَاتَ عَنْهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ ثَمَانَ عَشْرَةَ .

'A'isha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) married her when she was seven years old, and he was taken to his house as a bride when she was nine, and her dolls were with her; and when he (the Holy Prophet) died she was eighteen years old.³⁰³

4th Report from Sahih Muslim:

³⁰¹ *Sahih Muslim*, Book 8, Hadith 3309.

³⁰² *Sahih Muslim*, Book 8, Hadith 3310.

³⁰³ *Sahih Muslim*, Book 8, Hadith 3311a.

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وَحَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ يَحْيَى، وَإِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَأَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ وَأَبُو كُرَيْبٍ قَالَ يَحْيَى
وَإِسْحَاقُ أَخْبَرَنَا وَقَالَ الْآخَرَانِ. حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنِ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنِ الْأَسْوَدِ،
عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتٍّ وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ
بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ وَمَاتَ عَنْهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ ثَمَانَ عَشْرَةَ .

'A'isha (Allah be pleased with her) reported that Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) married her when she was six years old, and he (the Holy Prophet) took her to his house when she was nine, and when he (the Holy Prophet) died she was eighteen years old.³⁰⁴

The Ahadith mentioned at number 1 and 2 are again from Hisham son of Urwa, Urwa his father and Sayyida Aishah. We had already discussed the reasons for non-reliance of Hisham's reports during the period of his superannuation and mental disorder and need not go in further details here. Abu Usama Kufi in the 1st report had been the reporter from Hisham b. Urwa. Although most of the scholars express good opinion about him yet many others take him as Mudallis. For details please refer to p. 148 of *Teqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed. Similarly Abu Kuraib the last narrator of this Hadith was also considered Mudallis by the Muhaddithin (*Teqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed p. 158). Abu Muavia Dhareer, the reporter from Hisham in the 2nd Hadith has already been discussed as a Mudallis and Ghali Shiah. We cannot, therefore, rely on his report about Sayyida Aishah. The third Hadith of Sahih Muslim is with the Isnaad: Abdurrazzaq from Ma'mar from Zuhri from Urwa from Sayyida Aishah. Majority of the scholars believe that Zuhri had neither seen nor heard Urwa bin Zubayr during his life. Zuhri's reports from Urwa cannot, therefore, be relied upon. It is also worth consideration that the third person in the chain of Isnaad from Zuhri had been Abdurrazzaq Sina'ani (126-211 AH) the famous scholar and the compiler of Musannaf. In spite of bearing a great name as a Muhaddith, he had been accused of being a Ghali Shia who used to make certain additions in the *Jami Maamar* to

³⁰⁴ *Sahih Muslim*, Book 8, Hadith 3311b.

convert others to his faith. We cannot, therefore, rely on this fabricator and forger of the Ahadith. For detailed discussion on him please refer to the account of 'Abdurrazzaq' in chapter titled 'Prominent Figures in Chain of Narrators'.

As regards the narrators of the fourth Hadith, we may point out that Aswad b. Yazeed Nakhi from Kufah had been a Tabiee who died in 75 AH when Hisham was just 14 years old. Since Aswad had been visiting Makkah almost every year up to his death in 75 AH, he had good chances to call on Sayyida Aishah (d. 58 AH). Even subsequently, he continued to visit Makkah as well as Medina he had another 15 years to call on and to hear the Ahadith from Sayyida Asmaa bint Abi Bakr and Abdullah b. Zubair up to their death in 73 AH. Isn't it strange that Aswad b. Yazeed Nakhi reported nothing from Sayyida Asma, Abdullah b. Zubair or other Sahaba living till then? The end result is that all the reporters of the event in the 2nd century Hijra are from Kufah who report from no one else than Sayyida Aishah. It, therefore, is Khabar-e-Wahid disclosed about 144 years after the event nowhere else than at Kufah. Although many scholars hold good opinion about Aswad and Ibraheem Nakhii (50-96 AH) yet Aamash (61-148 AH) had been Mudallis (One who did not name his teacher), Mursil (who narrates Ahadith where the narrator between the Successor and Muhammad is omitted) and a Ghali Shia.³⁰⁵ As such, the singular report attributed to Sayyida Aishah pertaining to Ahadith about the well-publicized event which should have been reported by thousands and thousands of other Shaba cannot be accepted as a genuine report.

The Reports From Sunan Nasai

Imam Nasai was born at Nasa, Turkamanistan in 241 AH and died at Ramla or Makkah in 302 AH. The Ahadith about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah had, therefore, reached even the far off places in the North-East from Kufah. We, therefore, quote him in the following:

1st report from Sunan Nasai:

³⁰⁵ Minority Shia Muslim groups who ascribe divine characteristics to Sayyidina Ali and some of his descendants.

أَخْبَرَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، قَالَ أَبَانَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَزَوَّجَهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتٍّ وَبَنِيهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ

It was narrated from 'Aishah that the Messenger of Allah married her when she was six years old, and consummated the marriage with her when she was nine.³⁰⁶

2nd report from Sunan Nasai:

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ النَّضْرِ بْنِ مُسَاوِرٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا جَعْفَرُ بْنُ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِسَبْعِ سِنِينَ وَدَخَلَ عَلَيَّ لِسَبْعِ سِنِينَ .

Narrated Aishah: "The Messenger of Allah married me when I was seven years old, and he consummated the marriage with me when I was nine."³⁰⁷

3rd Report from Sunan Nasai:

أَخْبَرَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ مَطَرٍ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ أَبِي عُبَيْدَةَ، قَالَ قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِسَبْعِ سِنِينَ وَصَحْبُهُ تِسْعًا .

"Aishah said: 'The Messenger of Allah married me when I was nine and I lived with him for nine years.'"³⁰⁸

4th Report from Sunan Nasai

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْعَلَاءِ، وَأَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو مُعَاوِيَةَ، عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنِ الْأَسْوَدِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، تَزَوَّجَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ وَمَاتَ عَمُّهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ ثَمَانِي عَشْرَةَ .

It was narrated from 'Aishah that the Messenger of Allah married her when she was nine and he died when she was

³⁰⁶ *Sunan Nisai*, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith No. 3257.

³⁰⁷ *Sunan Nisai*, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith No. 3258.

³⁰⁸ *Sunan Nisai*, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith No. 3259.

eighteen years old.³⁰⁹

5th Report From Sunan Nasai:

أَخْبَرَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ آدَمَ، عَنْ عَبْدِةَ، عَنْ هِشَامٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَنَا بِنْتُ سِتٍّ وَدَخَلَ عَلَيَّ وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ وَكُنْتُ أَلْعَبُ بِالْبَتَاتِ .

Aishah Reported that: The Messenger of Allah married me when I was six, and consummated the marriage with me when I was nine, and I used to play with dolls.³¹⁰

6th Report from Sunan Nasai:

أَخْبَرَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ الْحَكَمِ بْنِ أَبِي مَرْيَمَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَمِّي، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَبِي بُرَيْدٍ، قَالَ أَخْبَرَنِي عُمَارَةُ بْنُ غَزِيَّةَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ وَتَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ .

It was narrated that Aishah Said: "The Messenger of Allah married me when I was six, and consummated the marriage with me when I was nine."³¹¹

All the six reports quoted above start from Sayyida Aishah and we find no endorsement of the same from any other companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The reports, therefore, remain Khabar-e-Wahid. The 1st, 2nd and 5th reports repeat the same chain of Hisham from Urwa from Aisha. Besides this, Abu Muavia, the reporter from Hisham b. Urwa in the Hadith mentioned at No. 1 has already been pointed by us as Mudallis and Ghali Shiah. His report cannot, therefore, be taken as free from doubt. We have already pointed out the reasons for disbelief in the reports of Hisham during his period of superannuation and blindness as well as mental disorder.

As regards the Report quoted at number 3 above containing the chain of narrators i.e. Mutarrif from Abu Ishaaq from Abu Ubaida from Aisha, we observe that Abu Ubaida was

³⁰⁹ *Sunan Nisai*, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith No. 3260.

³¹⁰ *Sunan Nisai*, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith No. 3380.

³¹¹ *Sunan Nisai*, Vol. 4, Book 26, Hadith No. 3381.

son of Abdullah b. Masud the companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who served as treasurer at Kufah but died at Medina in 653 AD i.e. 34 AH. Abu Ubaida was just a child of 5/6 years by the time of the death of his father due to which he neither heard nor remembered anything from him. In spite of that, it has been pointed out that Abu Ubaida used to narrate certain report from his father. **Imam Bukhari pointed out that he had made numerous mistakes in his narratives.** Hence, in spite of the fact that he might have good chances to hear from Sayyida Aishah up to 58 AH yet his evidence becomes doubtful. Although there had been many companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ including Abdullah b. Zubair and Asmaa bint Abu Bakr yet **Abu Ubaida did not hear anything from them about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah.** For further criticism on the report please refer to p. 94-102 of *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmad.

For criticism on Hadith mentioned at Number 4 above please refer to our observations recorded under Number 4 of the Ahadith from *Sahih Muslim*.

Two important members of the chain of narrators of Hadith quoted at Number 6 has already been discussed by us. Abu Salama was son of Abdurrahman b. Auf, his credibility is questioned by the scholars. For details please see pgs. 92-93 *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

Another reporter was Yahya b. Ayub who had been committing great mistakes due to which even Imam Ahmed rejected many narratives from him. Scholars like Nasai, Ibn-e-Younus, Ibn-e-Saad, Abu Zura, Dar Qutni are doubtful about his credibility. For details please see pgs 90-91, s.v. 'Yahya b. Ayub', *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

Reports From Sunan Ibn Maja

Sunan Ibn Majah compiled by Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd Ibn Mājah al-Rab'ī al-Qazwīnī (209-276) contains the following:

1st Report from Ibn Maja

حَدَّثَنَا سُوَيْدُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُسْهِرٍ، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - وَأَنَا بِنْتُ سِتِّ سِنِينَ فَقَدِمْنَا الْمَدِينَةَ فَزَلْنَا فِي بَيْتِ الْخَارِثِ بْنِ الْخَزْرَجِ فَوَعَكَتْ فَتَمَرَّقَ شَعْرِي حَتَّى وَفَى لَهُ جُمُعَتُهُ فَأَتَنِي أُتْمِي أُمُّ رُومَانَ وَإِنِّي لَأَرْجُو حَةً وَمَعِيَ صَوَاجِبَاتٌ لِي فَصَرَخَتْ بِي فَأَتَيْتُهَا وَمَا أَدْرِي مَا تَرِيدُ فَأَخَذَتْ يَدَيَّ فَأَوْقَفَتْنِي عَلَى بَابِ الْبَارِ وَإِنِّي لَأَنْهَجُ حَتَّى سَكَنَ بَعْضُ نَفْسِي ثُمَّ أَخَذَتْ شَيْئًا مِنْ مَاءٍ فَمَسَحَتْ بِهِ عَلَى وَجْهِي وَرَأْسِي ثُمَّ أَدَخَلَتْنِي الْبَارَ فَإِذَا نِسْوَةٌ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ فِي بَيْتٍ فَقُلْنَ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ وَالْبَرَكَةِ وَعَلَى خَيْرِ طَائِرٍ . فَأَسْلَمْتَنِي إِلَيْهِنَّ فَأَصْلَحْنَ مِنْ شَأْنِي فَلَمْ يَرْعِنِي إِلَّا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - ضَحَّى . فَأَسْلَمْتَنِي إِلَيْهِ وَأَنَا يَوْمَئِذٍ بِنْتُ تِسْعِ سِنِينَ

Suwaid ibn Saeed told us that Ali b. Mus'hir narrated to us from Hisham from his father that Aisha narrated: "The Messenger of Allah married me when I was six years old. Then we came to Al-Madinah and settled among Banu Harith bin Khazraj. I became ill and my hair fell out, then it grew back and became abundant. My mother Umm Ruman came to me while I was on an Urjuhah with some of my friends, and called for me. I went to her, and I did not know what she wanted. She took me by the hand and made me stand at the door of the house, and I was panting. When I got my breath back, she took some water and wiped my face and head, and led me into the house. There were some woman of the Ansar inside the house, and they said: 'With blessings and good fortune (from Allah).' (My mother) handed me over to them and they tidied me up. And suddenly I saw the Messenger of Allah in the morning. And she handed me over to him and I was at that time, nine years old.³¹²

2nd Report from Sunan Ibn-e-Maja

حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ سِنَانٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أَحْمَدَ، حَدَّثَنَا إِسْرَائِيلُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ أَبِي عُبَيْدَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ تَزَوَّجَ النَّبِيُّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - عَائِشَةَ وَهِيَ بِنْتُ سَبْعٍ وَبَنَى بِهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ وَتَوَفَّى عَنْهَا وَهِيَ بِنْتُ ثَمَانِي عَشْرَةَ سَنَةً .

Abdullah said: "The Prophet married Aishah when she was seven years old, and consummated the marriage with her when she was nine, and he passed away when she was eighteen.³¹³

³¹² Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 3, Book 9, Chapters on Marriage, Hadith 1876.

³¹³ Sunan Ibn Majah Vol. 3, Book 9, Chapters on Marriage, Hadith No. 1877.

Besides Sayyida Aishah, Urwa and Hisham, we also find Ali b. Mus'hir among the narrators of the Hadith quoted at No. 1 above. In spite of certain minor differences in the narrative, the Hadith seems to contain the same subject as described by Ali b. Mus'hir in the Hadith quoted by us at No. 1 under the reports of Sahih Bukhari above. After hearing the Hadith from Hisham b. Urwa in about 145 AH, Ali bin Mushir Kufi had publicized it during his end days in 185-189 AH. By that time he had already lost his eye sight. He had been the only person among the pupils of Hisham who narrated about the age of Aysha at the time of consummation of her marriage. It has been commented that he intentionally forged certain words in the narrative to give impression of minority/immaturity of Aysha. For further details see *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, p. 199-208 and 214.

As regards the contents of the Hadith, we have criticized the same in greater detail in Hadith No. 26228 of *Musnad Imam Ahmad*, Ch. Musnad Aisha, Vol. 2 which shall be discussed in detail subsequently.

The 2nd Hadith from *Ibn-e-Majah* has been given with the following Isnad:

حدثنا احمد بن سنان قال حدثنا ابو احمد قال حدثنا اسرائيل عن ابي اسحاق عن ابي عبيدة
عن عبد الله قال :----

It is worth noting here that **the afore-stated Abdullah could only be Abdullah bin Masud** (RA) the famous companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who died in 32/34 AH when his son Abu Ubaida was just 5/6 years old. Abu Ubaida, therefore, might not have heard or remembered anything from his father and he himself admits the same.³¹⁴

As such Abu Ubaida's report from his father Abdullah cannot be relied upon. In case Abu Ubaida had himself heard about it directly from Sayyida Aishah, he should have mentioned her as the primary narrator of the Hadith. The

³¹⁴ For details please see pages 98-99 of *Teqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* (urdu), by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

omission of her name, therefore, makes the Hadith *Mursal* and *Munqati*. The Hadith loses its credibility as an authentic report. Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed has devoted pages 75–86 to prove that Abdullah b. Masud R.A. could not have narrated this Hadeeth. The readers interested to know details may, therefore, refer to the same.

We already discussed the 2nd Hadith from Ibn-e-Maja wherein we concluded that the same cannot be from Abdullah b. Masud.

Reports From Sunan Abu Dawood

Sunan Abu Dawud compiled by Abu Dawud Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath al-Azdi as-Sijistani (202-276 AH).

1st Report from Abu Dawud:

حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، وَأَبُو كَامِلٍ قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ تَزَوَّجَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَأَنَا بِنْتُ سَبْعٍ - سَلِيمَانُ أَوْ سِتٍّ - وَدَخَلَ بِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ تِسْعٍ

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) married me when I was seven years old. The narrator Sulaiman said: or Six years. He had intercourse with me when I was nine years old.³¹⁵

2nd Report from Abu Dawood

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادٌ، ح وَحَدَّثَنَا بِشْرُ بْنُ خَالِدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ عُرْوَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، قَالَتْ إِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَزَوَّجَنِي وَأَنَا بِنْتُ سَبْعٍ بَسِينٍ فَلَمَّا قَدِمْنَا الْمَدِينَةَ أَتَيْتُ نِسْوَ - وَقَالَ بِشْرٌ فَأَتَيْتُ أُمَّ رُومَانَ - وَأَنَا عَلَى أَرْجُوخَةٍ فَدَهَبَنِي بِي وَهَيَّأَنِي وَصَنَعَنِي فَأَتَيْتُ بِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَبَنَى بِي وَأَنَا ابْنَةُ تِسْعٍ فَوَقَفْتُ بِي عَلَى الْبَابِ فَقُلْتُ هِيَ هِيَ - قَالَ أَبُو دَاوُدَ أَيْ تَنَفَّسْتُ - فَأَدْخَلْتُ بَيْتًا فَإِذَا فِيهِ نِسْوَ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ فَقُلْتُ عَلَى الْخَيْرِ وَالْبَرَكَةِ . دَخَلَ حَدِيثٌ أَحَدُهُمَا فِي الْآخَرِ .

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) married me when I was seven or six. When we came to Medina, some women came. according to Bishr's version: Umm Ruman came to me when I was swinging. They took me, made me prepared and

³¹⁵ *Sunan Abu Dawood*, Book on Marriage, Book No. 11, Hadith No. 2116.

Ch. 10 – Ahadith Suggesting Tender Age of Sayyida²⁴⁷ Aishah

decorated me. I was then brought to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), and he took up cohabitation with me when I was nine. She halted me at the door, and I burst into laughter. (Abu Dawud said: That is to say: I [was out of breath] and I was brought in a house, and there were some women of the Ansari in it. They said: With good luck and blessing. The tradition of one of them has been included in the other.³¹⁶

We observe that the Hadith mentioned at No. 1 and 2 above are again from the singular original narrative of Sayyida Aishah, Urwa and Hisham about whom we have already discussed in detail. As regards Hammad B. Zaid Basri (98-179 AH) he too had no news about the event before his hearing the same from Hisham b. Urwa in about 146 AH. In spite of the fact that most of the scholars had declared Hammad b. Zaid as a credible person and Sulaiman b. Harb (born and died at Basra in 140-224 AH) like him yet due to the first revelation about the age of Sayyida Aishah in 145 AH at Kufah and no where else and many other lacunas in the narratives of Hisham b. Urwa, we cannot attach certainty to the report about the event. As regards of Abu Usama Kufi, many scholars take him as Mudallis. For details please refer to p. 148 of *Teqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed. We also remember that no action or direction of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) could ever be ignored by his companions. A Hadith in Sahih Bukhari confirms the same:

وعن عبد الله بن عمرو بن العاص رضي الله عنها أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال:
"بلغوا عني ولو آية وحدثوا عن بني إسرائيل ولا حرج، ومن كذب علي متعمداً فليتبوأ
مقعه من النار".

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Convey from me even an Ayah of the Qur'an; relate traditions from Banu Israel, and there is no restriction on that; but he who deliberately forges a lie against me let him have his abode in the Hell."³¹⁷

³¹⁶

³¹⁷ *Sahih Bukhari*, Book 13 'The Book of Knowledge', Hadith 1380.

The companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had, therefore, been taking utmost care to memorize or record each and every word spoken by the Holy Prophet ﷺ or the action taken by him. We, therefore, observe that instead of pronouncing the Hadith about the age of Sayyida Aishah, both Urwa and Hisham b. Urwa had been concealing the news from other believers up to 145 AH. Even subsequently, no one among his disciples except Ali b. Mus'hir publicized this Hadith before 185 AH. What was the justification for that, we do not know?

Except for 3 visits to Kufah, Hisham had spent almost his entire life at Medina but we do not know any of his disciples there. Even Imam Malik, (93-179 AH) did not report the Hadith about the age of Aysha from Hisham or anyone else. Hisham died at Baghdad in **146 AH** at the age of 86 years. All those people who had died before that date did not know about the Hadith describing the age of Sayyida Aysha. Although Imam Abu Hanifa (80-150) and Hisham had been together at Baghdad yet he or his disciples like Imam Abu Yousuf (113/7-181 AH) and Imam Muhammad b. Hasan al-Shaybani (132-189 AH) report no such Hadith from Hisham b. Urwa. Similarly Imam Jaafar Sadiq (83-148 AH) and Abdullah b. Mubarak (118-181 AH) a disciple of Hisham did not take this Hadith from him.

It has also been reported that Ibn-e-Is'haq had been a disciple of Zuhri and Hisham b. Urwa. He based his Seerah on the reports of both.³¹⁸ Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed says that we do not find any reference about the tender aged marriage of Sayyida Aishah in the sources pertaining to his time.³¹⁹ According to the scholars the original version of Seerat Ibn Ishaq (85-159 AH) did not contain any reference to the age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of the consummation of her marriage. Ibn-e-Ishaq had presented the Seerah prepared by him to Khalifah al-Mansoor in 144 AH. Muhammad b. Ishaq, thereafter, started living at Baghdad and died there in 151 AH. The original **manuscripts of Ibn-e-Ishaq kept safe at the caliphate library** had no mention **of the consummation of the**

³¹⁸ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 246.

³¹⁹ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 439.

marriage of Sayyida Aisha at the age of 9 years.³²⁰

Factually, such a report also had no existence in the history or books of Ahadith before its publication by Ali b. Mus'hir at Kufa during 185-189 AH. Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed, therefore, opines that the insertion about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah and taking her dolls with her has been made by Abdurrazzaq. Other sources including disciples of Zuhri i.e. Musa b. Uqba, Muhammad b. Saib Kalbi,³²¹ and Ibn Saad etc. do not narrate about the illness, falling and growing of the hair or consummation of her marriage before noon.

Confliction Between the Reports

Historians and Muhaddithin differ from each other about the place and also the time of the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah as detailed below:

(1) The first report about the consummation of Sayyida Aishah's marriage is from the long Hadith quoted from *Musnad Imam Ahmed*. Sayyida Aishah reports that it was at the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr at Sunh that her mother brought her from the swing:

ثم دخلت بي فإذا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جالس على سرير في بيتنا وعنده رجال ونساء من الأنصار فأجلستني في حجره

Then she entered me, so then I saw that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting on the bed **in our house** and there were some men and women of Ansaar with him so she seated me in the vicinity of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.³²²

This shows that the marriage of Sayyida Aishah was consumed at Sunh during the morning hours at the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr when many women of Ansar had gathered there.

³²⁰ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqi*, p. 439-440.

³²¹ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqi*, p. 191.

³²² *Musnad-e-Ahmad*, Ch. Musnad Aisha, Vol. 11, Hadith No. 26288.

(2) Ibn-e-Saad, however, reports Sayyida Aishah having said:

Muhammad b. Umar reports from Musa b. Muhammad b. Abdurrahman from Raitah from Amra bint Abdurrahman from Sayyida Aishah (...) and the Holy Prophet ﷺ consumed his marriage with me **in the house in which I am living today**. He died here and he had opened a door from this house for the purpose of going to Masjid-e-Nabvi.³²³

(3) As against the above, the Hadith reported by us at No. 2 from Abu Dawood quotes Sayyida Aishah **فادخلت بيّتا** (i.e. **I was brought in a house**) without specifying that it was the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr or her own house attached to Masjid-e-Nabvi. The place of consummation of marriage, therefore, becomes doubtful.

(4) Tabri (224-310 AH) refers to Aishah's mother's taking her from the swing and **consummation of her marriage in the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr**.

(5) There is another report from Tabri which differs from all. According to It, it was three years before Hijra that the Holy Prophet ﷺ consumed the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 years. The place of consummation, therefore, stands shifted from Medina to Makkah and the age of Sayyida Aishah three years before Hijra has been mentioned as 9 years.³²⁴ This report, therefore, cannot be reconciled with any other report on record. We, therefore, leave it to the readers to determine the true facts.

Imam Bukhari seems to have relied mostly upon Ali b. Mus'hir in (*Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 5, Book 58, Number 234) and Abdurrazzaq. Similarly, Ibn-e-Maja had been one of the other compilers of *Sihah Khamsa* who has given us a shorter version of the same Hadith of Ali b. Mus'hir in his collection (*Sunan Ibn Majah*, Vol. 3, Book 9, Chapters on Marriage, Hadith No. 1876). **These details have not been reported by anyone except Ali b. Mus'hir which singles him out from other traditionists who have quoted much shorter Ahadith from Hisham and Urwa b. Zubair.**

³²³ Ibn-e-Saad, *Tabaqaat* (Urdu), Vol. 8, (Deoband: Hafiz Book Depot, UP, Uthmani Brothers), p. 87.

³²⁴ History of Tabri (Urdu), Vol. II, p. 216.

Some of the scholars believe that the change in the age of Aysa at the time of her Nikaah and consummation of marriage might have been made purposely either by Hisham himself or other Shia disciples like Ali b. Mus'hir and Abdurrazzaq. There is no doubt that many of the Iraqi reporters had a Shiite trend. They had a grudge against Aisha due to her armed conflict with Ali bin Abi Talib during the Battle of Camel in 36 AH. Muslim community stood divided in two groups thereafter. Some of the followers of Ali bin abi Talib started fabricating certain Ahadith to establish superiority and rightfulness of Ali bin Abi Talib for the succession to the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The mainstream Muslims, however, did not accept such fabrications. Without going into further details, we can assume that the reporters from Kufa might have intentionally depicted the age of Ayshah 10 years younger than her actual age to show lack of maturity and sound judgment in her.

The Hadith in *Musnad-e-Ahmed*

Perhaps the most detailed narrative pertaining to the events after the death of Sayyida Khadijah up to the consummation of the marriage of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with Sayyida Aishah is found in Musnad of Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal (164-241 AH) who had been one of the four great jurists of the mainstream Islam. We, therefore, reproduce the same for the benefit of our readers.

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي حدثنا محمد بن بشر قال حدثنا محمد بن عمرو قال حدثنا أبو سلمة ويحيى قالوا: لما هلك خديجة جاءت خولة بنت حكيم امرأة عثمان بن مظعون قالت: يا رسول الله ألا تزوج قال: -من قالت: إن شئت بكرا أو ثيبا قال: فمن البكر قالت ابنة أحب خلق الله عز وجل إليك عائشة بنت أبي بكر قال: ومن الثيب قالت: سودة بنت زمعة قد آمنت بك واتبعتك على ما تقول قال: فاذهي فأذكرها علي فدخلت بيت أبي بكر فقالت: يا أم رومان ماذا أدخل الله عز وجل عليكم من الخير والبركة قالت: وما ذاك قالت: أرسلني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أخطب عليه عائشة قالت: انتظري أبا بكر حتى

يَأْتِي بِجَاءِ أَبُو بَكْرٍ فَقَالَتْ: يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ مَاذَا أَدْخَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَالْبِرَّةِ قَالَ وَمَا ذَاكَ
 قَالَتْ: أَرْسَلَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَخْطَبُ عَلَيْهِ عَائِشَةَ قَالَ: وَهَلْ تَصْلَحُ لَهُ إِنَّمَا
 هِيَ ابْنَةُ أَخِيهِ فَرَجَعْتَ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَذَكَرْتَ لَهُ ذَلِكَ قَالَ: ارْجِعِي إِلَيْهِ
 فَقُولِي لَهُ أَنَا أَخُوكَ وَأَنْتَ أَخِي فِي الْإِسْلَامِ وَابْنَتُكَ تَصْلَحُ لِي فَرَجَعْتَ فَذَكَرْتَ لَهُ ذَلِكَ قَالَ:
 أَنْتَ ظَرِي وَخَرَجَ قَالَتْ أُمُّ رُومَانَ إِنَّ مَطْعَمَ بْنِ عَدِي قَدْ كَانَ ذَكَرَهَا عَلَى ابْنِهِ فَوَاللَّهِ مَا وَعَدَ
 وَعَدًا قَطُّ فَأَخْلَفَهُ لِأَبِي بَكْرٍ فَدَخَلَ أَبُو بَكْرٍ عَلَى مَطْعَمَ بْنِ عَدِي وَعِنْدَهُ امْرَأَتُهُ أُمُّ الْفَتَى فَقَالَ:
 يَا ابْنَ أَبِي تَخَافُ لَعْلَكَ مَصِيبُ صَاحِبِنَا مَدْخَلُهُ فِي دِينِكَ الَّذِي أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ تَزَوَّجَ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ
 أَبُو بَكْرٍ لِلْمَطْعَمِ بْنِ عَدِي: أَقُولُ هَذِهِ تَقُولُ قَالَ: إِنَّهَا تَقُولُ ذَلِكَ فَخَرَجَ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ وَقَدْ أَذْهَبَ
 اللَّهُ عِزَّ وَجَلَّ مَا كَانَ فِي نَفْسِهِ مِنْ عِدَّتِهِ الَّتِي وَعَدَهُ فَرَجَعَ فَقَالَ لِحَوْلَةَ: ادْعِي لِي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ
 صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَدَعْتَهُ فَزَوَّجَهَا إِيَّاهُ **وعائشة يومئذ بنت ست**
سنين ثُمَّ خَرَجَتْ فَدَخَلَتْ عَلَى سُودَةَ بِنْتِ زَمْعَةَ فَقَالَتْ: مَاذَا أَدْخَلَ اللَّهُ عِزَّ وَجَلَّ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ
 الْخَيْرِ وَالْبِرَّةِ قَالَتْ: وَمَا ذَاكَ قَالَتْ: أَرْسَلَنِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَخْطَبُكَ عَلَيْهِ
 قَالَتْ: وَدِدْتُ ادْخُلِي إِلَى أَبِي فَادْكَرِي ذَاكَ لَهُ وَكَانَ شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا قَدْ أَدْرَكَهُ السِّنُّ قَدْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنِ
 الْحَجِّ فَدَخَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَحَبَّتْهُ بِتَحِيَّةِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَقَالَ: مِنْ هَذِهِ فَقَالَتْ: خَوْلَةُ بِنْتُ حَكِيمٍ قَالَ: هُمَا
 شَأْنُكَ قَالَتْ: أَرْسَلَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ أَخْطَبُكَ عَلَيْهِ سُودَةُ قَالَ: كَفَّءُ كَرِيمٍ مَاذَا تَقُولُ
 صَاحِبَتُكَ قَالَتْ: تَحِبُّ ذَاكَ قَالَ: ادْعِهَا لِي فَدَعَيْتَهَا قَالَ: أَيُّ بَيْتَةٍ إِنْ هَذِهِ تَزْعُمُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدَ بْنَ
 عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ قَدْ أَرْسَلَ يَخْطُبُكَ وَهُوَ كَفَّءُ كَرِيمٍ أَتَحْبِبِينَ أَنْ أَزَوِّجَكَ بِهِ قَالَتْ: نَعَمْ
 قَالَتْ: ادْعِهُ لِي بِجَاءِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَيْهِ فَزَوَّجَهَا إِيَّاهُ بِجَاءِ أَخُوهَا عَبْدُ بْنُ
 زَمْعَةَ مِنَ الْحَجِّ فَجَعَلَ يَحْثِي فِي رَأْسِهِ التُّرَابَ فَقَالَ بَعْدَ أَنْ أَسْلَمَ: لَعَمْرُكَ إِنِّي لَسَفِيهٌ يَوْمَ أَحْثِي
 فِي رَأْسِي التُّرَابَ أَنْ تَزَوَّجَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ سُودَةَ بِنْتَ زَمْعَةَ قَالَتْ: عَائِشَةُ
 فَقَدِمْنَا الْمَدِينَةَ فَزَلْنَا فِي بَيْتِ الْحَرِثِ بْنِ الْخَزْرَجِ فِي السَّنَحِ قَالَتْ: بِجَاءِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ
 عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَدَخَلَ بَيْتَنَا وَاجْتَمَعَ إِلَيْهِ رِجَالُ مِنَ الْأَنْصَارِ وَنِسَاءٌ فَجَاءَتْنِي أُمِّي وَإِنِّي لَفِي أَرْجُوحةٍ
 بَيْنَ عَذْقَيْنِ تَرَجِحُ بِي فَأَنْزَلَتْنِي مِنَ الْأَرْجُوحةِ وَلِي جَمِيعَةٌ فَفَرَّقَتْنِي وَمَسَحَتْ وَجْهِي بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ
 ثُمَّ أَقْبَلَتْ تَقُوذِي حَتَّى وَقَفَتْ بِي عِنْدَ الْبَابِ وَإِنِّي لَأَمْهَجُ حَتَّى سَكَنَ مِنْ نَفْسِي ثُمَّ دَخَلْتُ بِي
 فَإِذَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ جَالِسٌ عَلَى سُرِيرٍ فِي بَيْتِنَا وَعِنْدَهُ رِجَالٌ وَنِسَاءٌ مِنْ
 الْأَنْصَارِ فَأَجْلَسَتْنِي فِي حِجْرِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَتْ: هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْلُكَ فَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ لَكَ فِيهِمْ وَبَارَكَ لَهُمْ فِيكَ فَوَثَبَ
 الرِّجَالُ وَالنِّسَاءُ فَخَرَجُوا وَبَنَى بِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي بَيْتِنَا مَا نَحَرْتُ عَلَيْهِ
 جُزُورًا وَلَا دَحِيتُ عَلَيْهِ شَاةً حَتَّى أَرْسَلَ إِلَيْنَا سَعْدُ بْنُ عُبَادَةَ بِجَفْنَةٍ كَانَ يُرْسِلُ بِهَا إِلَى رَسُولِ
 اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا دَارَ إِلَى نِسَائِهِ وَأَنَا **يومئذ بنت تسع سنين**³²⁵

Abdullah told us that his father reported from Muhammad b.

Bishr³²⁶ that Muhammad bin Amr³²⁷ told us that Abu Salama³²⁸ and Yahya said that when Khadijah (ra) died Khawla bint Hakeem the wife Uthman ibn Mazuoon³²⁹, came (to the Prophet ﷺ) and said: O prophet of Allah (peace be upon you), will you not marry?, He asked: "who?", She said "**if you want, a virgin or if you want, a non-virgin**". The Prophet ﷺ asked: "so who is the virgin?" she replied: "the daughter of the most beloved to you among the creatures of Allah (i.e.) Aishah bint Abi Bakr". He said "and who is the non-virgin?", she replied: "Sawda bint Zamaa, she has believed you and followed you in what you say". He (the Prophet ﷺ) said: "So go and mention (me) to both of them". So she entered the

³²⁶ Muhammad b. Bishr was born in Kufa during the Caliphate of Hisham b. Abdul Malik (r. 105-125 AH) and died in 203 AH. Among others, he reported Ahadith from Hisham b. Urwa, Aamash, Abi Hayan al-Taimi, Ubaidullah b. Umar and Muhammad b. Amr etc.

³²⁷ The present writer has no credible information about Muhammad b. Amr. He seems to be Muhammad b. Amr b. Ata Tabi. According to Wikipedia he died during the last days of the Caliphate of Hisham b. Abd al-Malik i.e. sometime before 125 AH.

³²⁸ Abu Salama could be the first cousin of Muhammad ﷺ born to Barrah bint Abdul Mutlib. He was married to Umm Salama, and they were among the first who converted to Islam. Abu Salama was also involved in the migration towards Ethiopia. He died from a wound sustained during the Battle of Uhud that reopened after he had led the Expedition of Qatan. After his death, the Holy Prophet ﷺ married Umm-e-Salama the widow of Abu Salama in Shawwal 4 AH.

³²⁹ Uthman b. Mazoon **had been a foster-brother (اخ من الرضاع) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ**. Besides being one of the earliest companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Uthman b. Mazoon had also been famous for his devotion to the worship of the Almighty and refraining from most of the worldly attractions. He also had been the **real brother of Zainab bint Mazoon the mother of Umm al-Mumineen Sayyida Hafsa**. Zainab too had been one of the important companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Uthman (RA) was married to Khawlah bint Hakim, both being two of the earliest converts to Islam. Uthman had the honor to lead the first group of Muslims migrating to Abyssinia. **He died in the 2nd year of Hijrah and had been the first muhajir companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to be buried in the Jannat-ul-Baqi' in Medina.** After burying him there, the Holy Prophet ﷺ declared 'Jannat-ul-Baqi' as the grave yard of the Muslims dying at Medina (*Sahaba Karam Encyclopedia* by Dr. Zul-Fiqar Kazim, (Urdu), (Lahore: Nabha Rd. Anarkali), pp. 346-348).

house of Abu Bakr and said "O Umm Rumman! How much bounties and blessings Allah has showered upon all of you!" she asked "and what is it?", she (Khawla) replied: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has sent me for (marriage) proposal of Aisha for himself. She said: "Wait for Abu Bakr to come", so Abu Bakr came so she said "O Abu Bakr How much bounties and blessings Allah has showered upon all of you!" He asked "and what is it?", she (Khawla) replied: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has sent me for (marriage) proposal of Aisha for himself. He asked "and **is she appropriate for for him (as) she is just a daughter of his brother?**" so she returned to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and told him about it. He (the Prophet ﷺ) said: "Return to him and tell him that I am your brother and your are my brother in Islam (and not real brother) and your daughter is appropriate for me". So she returned and told him that. He said "wait" and went out. Umm Rumman said that Mutam bin Addi had (already) mentioned (to marry) her (i.e Aisha) to his son. So by Allah Abu Bakr has never made a promise that he did not keep. So Abu Bakr visited Mutam b. Addi while his wife Umm al-Fata was with him. so she said "O son of Abi Qahafa, you perhaps would make our son 'Sabi' by entering him into your religion if he marries among you". Abu Bakr said to Mutam b. Addi "Do you also say the same thing?" He said "(yes) She is saying it (right)". So (Abu Bakr) left their his house and Allah has cleared his heart from the burden of pledge that he had made (to Mutam bin Addi about Aisha's marriage). So he returned and said to Khawla: "Call the Messenger of Allah ﷺ" so she called him and he married her to him and Aishah that day was six years old. Then left and entered the house of Sawda bint Zamaa. So she said: "How much bounties and blessings Allah has showered upon you!" she asked "and what is it?", She (Khawla) replied: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has sent me proposing to you for (marriage) with himself". She said: "I would like that you enter to my father and mention that to him", and he was very old man having lived his entire life and could not manage to go for Hajj. So she entered (his room) and greeted him in the way of Jahiliyyah. So He said "who is she?" She said "Khawla bint Hakeem". He asked "what is your matter (that brought you here)", she said: "Muhammad b. Abdullah has sent me proposing his marriage with Sawda. He said: "That is (proposal from) a noble personality, what does your friend say (about this)?", she replied "She likes that". He said: "call her to me". So I called her. He said to Sawda: "O my dear daughter! This (lady) thinks that Muhammad b. Abdullah b. Abd al-Muttalib has sent you a proposal for marriage and he is a noble personality. Do you like that I marry you to him?" She replied: "Yes", He said call him to me. So the Messenger of Allah came to him so he married her to

him. So her brother Abd bin Zamaa came to her from Hajj and started throwing dust in his head. Then later after accepting Islam he said "I swear that I was a fool on the day when I was throwing dust in my head because the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married Sawda bint Zamaa". Aishah says: "So we came to Medina and stayed (at a house) among the tribe of Banu Harith bin Khazraj (that were settled) at *Sunh*. (Aishah) Says: So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came and entered our house and some men and women of Ansaar gathered around him. So my Mother came to me while I was in a swing (tied) between two trees, **not telling me clearly (what was happening)** so she got me off the swing and I had some hair so she parted them and cleaned my face with some water then started leading me (towards the door) until she stopped me at the door and I was out of breath. Then she entered me, so then I saw that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was sitting on the bed **in our house** and there were some men and women of Ansaar with him so she seated me in the vicinity of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ then she said: These are your family so may Allah give you Barakah from them and may Allah give them them *Barakah* from you. So the men and women got up then went out. So the Messenger of Allah consummated (the marriage) with me. No camel was slaughtered for me and no goat was cut up for me until Saad b. Ubada sent us a big cup (of milk) which he used to send to the Messenger of Allah whenever he would visit his wives, and **I was that day nine years old.**

Critical Review of the Isnad:

1. The first direct narrator of this Hadith i.e. Yahya cannot be identified by us. He could be Yahya b. Urwa, Yahya b. Abdurrahman b. Awf, Yahya b. Ayub or Yahya b. Said al-Ansari. Tabrani (260-360 AH) the most important Sunni hadith scholar of his time identifies Yahya as Yahya b. Abdurrahman b. Hatib b. Abi Balta'a who was born sometime during the caliphate of Uthman b. Affan and died in about 104 AH. He, therefore, cannot, be taken as an eye witness to the matters narrated by him. The narrative attributed to him, therefore, suffers from Tadlees seriously. Imam Nasai, however, identifies the reporter as Yahya b. Ayub. According to many scholars, Yahya b. Ayub had been committing great mistakes due to which even **Imam Ahmed rejected many narratives from him. Scholars**

like Nasai, Ibn-e-Younus, Ibn-e-Saad, Abu Zura, Dar Qutni are doubtful about his credibility. For details please see pgs 90-91, s.v. 'Yahya b. Ayub', *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed. We also observe that being a Tabiee, Yahya should have mentioned the name of Sahabi from whom he had heard this news. In the absence of the name of the original transmitter of Hadith, it suffers from lacuna i.e. **tadlees affecting its credibility** as a reporter of the Hadith.

2. We even fail to identify Abu Salama. He could either be Abu Salama the first cousin and companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who died in 4th of Hijra (as discussed in the footnote) whereas the next narrator from him i.e. **Muhammad b. Amr died some time during the last days of the reign of Hisham b. Abd al-Malik which ended in 125 AH.** This suggests that Muhammad b. Amr might have born many years after the death of Abu Salama (RA) the first husband of Umm alMumineen Umm-e-Salama. As such, there could be no possibility of Muhammad b. Amr's hearing the Hadith directly from Abu Salama who died in early 4th AH. The omission of a narrator between Abu Salama and Muhammad b. Amr i.e. Tadlee makes the Hadith incredible.

Alternately, if this Abu Salama (22-94 AH) was son of Abdurrahman b. Auf. Being born in 22 AH, he was not in a position to report about the event as a witness of the same.³³⁰ **The report, therefore, seems to be a mixture of the news collected from various sources.** It no doubt contains lot of truth yet the Hadith in the present form is an amalgamation / mixture of different sources including certain unauthorized insertions from the antagonists of Sayyida Aishah. The Hadith also suffers from Tadlee due to which we cannot attach credibility especially referring to the tender age of Sayyida Aishah. As regards the words of the narrator [[وعائشة يومئذ بنت ست سنين]], the counterpart of which have subsequently been ascribed to Sayyida Aishah herself saying [[وانا يومئذ بنت تسع سنين]], the scholars observe that the same may be the insertions from some later persons to show immaturity and tender age of Sayyida Aishah. **The corruption or late entry of the Hadith in the collection of Imam Ahmed is also**

³³⁰ For details please see pgs. 92-93 *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

evident from the fact that the jurisprudence prepared by him shows his complete ignorance about the age of Sayyida Aishah.

3. The final reporter of the Hadith, Muhammad b. Bishr was born in Kufah during the reign of Hisham b. Abd al-Malik (105-125 AH) and died in 203 AH. It is, therefore, evident from the above that Muhammad b. Bishr could have heard the Hadith from Muhammad b. Amr during his early youth (i.e. sometime before 125 AH) while he might have retransmitted it to Imam Ahmed (164-241 AH) towards the later part of his life. The time gap of more than 60 years between hearing and its retransmission might, therefore, have affected the accuracy of the transmission. The Hadith also suffers from various other challenges which shall be discussed subsequently.

Although Imam Bukhari and others had reported the age of Aysha as 9 years at the time of the consummation of her marriage yet it conflicts with Ibn Hisham's report about those persons who had accepted Islam in 1 Nabvi as quoted below:

ثم اسلم ابو عبيده بن الجراح و اسماء بنت ابى بكر و عائشه بنت ابى بكر و هى يومئذ
صغيرة

Then Abu Ubaida b. Jarrah and Asma bint Abi Bakr and Ayshah bint Abi Bakr accepted Islam and she (Aysha) was still young in those days.³³¹

Although ibn Hisham describes, Sayyida Aysha as very young yet if she was even of 7-8 years in 1 Nabvi, she would have been of about 19 or 20 years at the time of Hijrah. At page 441 of his book Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed has said that the Great Tabiee, scholar and Faqeeh of Medina i.e. Saleh b. Kesan (40-140 AH) knew nothing about the tender aged marriage of Sayyida Aishah. He believed that her Nikaah had been solemnized during the time of her رشد i.e. rectitude or full maturity. For further details please

³³¹ Ibn Hisham, *Seerat-un-Nabaviyyah*, Vol. I, p. 354, cited by Hakeem Mehmood Ahmad Zafar, 'Ummahat-ul-Mumineen' (Urdu) p. 96.

refer to the book mentioned above. Some scholars, therefore, are of the opinion that وهى يومئذ صغيرة is a later insertion in the writings of Ibn Hisham. May be some later writer added it to conform to the Ahadith in the Sihah Sittah. Allama Qastalani in his book *Muhib-ul-Laduniyyah* reported from Ibn Saad that:

قال ابن سعد اول امرأة اسلمت بعد خديجه ام الفضل زوج العباس و اسماء بنت ابي بكر و عائشه اختها

Ibn Saad said the first woman after Khadijah who accepted Islam was Umm alFadhal the wife of Al-Abbas and Asmaa bint Abi Bakr and Aysha her sister.³³²

We, therefore, observe that instead of reporting Aysha as صغيره i.e. young, ibn Saad (168-230 AH) described Ayshah simply as اختها i.e. her (Asma's) sister. The narrative apparently contains a sense of equality in the ages of two sisters as daughters of Abu bakr from two different wives. As such, the matter of the ages of Aysha and Asma has become debatable among the historians as shall be highlighted in the forth-coming discussion. Presently, we may also refer to the opinion of certain scholars who think that acceptance of Islam has a meaning only when one is mature enough to differentiate between the right and the wrong. Young children, therefore, need not be mentioned among the believers of Islam. In this respect, we cannot ignore the fact that the Historians did not mention the names of Ruqayya and Fatimah the daughters of the Holy Prophet ﷺ among those who had accepted Islam during 1st Nabvi. The mention of Ayshah in the list along with Asma, therefore, implies her maturity as well as equality with Asma.

According to some reports Asma the sister of Aysha was 10 years older than her but Nikah of Asma with Zubair b. Awwam and Nikah/ betrothal of Aysha with Jubair b. Mutim seem to have taken place almost during the same period of time. Zubayr b. Awwam was born 28 years before Hijra. The historians agree that Nikah of Sayyida Asma with him took place when she was about 25 years old. Sayyida Aysha's Nikah with Jubayr was also solemnized during the

³³² Mawahib-ul-Ladunniyyah, p. 46, cited by cited by Hakeem Mehmood Ahmad Zafar, 'Ummahat-ul-Mumineen' (Urdu) p. 97.

same period of time and perhaps earlier than the Nikah of Asma. As against the above, the Seera Ibn Hisham and some other historians following him record that the Nikah of Sayyida Aysha with the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had been solemnized after the death of Sayyida Khadijah-tul-Kubra about three years before Hijra when Aysha was just 6 years old. Earlier to that she had remained betrothed or married to Jubair for perhaps more than a year. The age of Aysha at the time of her Nikah with Jubayr can, therefore, be assessed as 4-5 years. If she was just four or five years old at that time, we fail to understand the necessity or urgency compelling Abu Bakr to marry one girl of 25 years and another of 4-5 years during the same period of time.

Reverting to the Hadith No. 26288 of Musnad Imam Ahmed we believe that Khawla was seriously concerned to provide an immediate solution to the problems faced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She could, therefore, ill-afford to suggest any long term planning than providing immediate relief to him. Khawla's suggestion could be considered reasonable only if Sayyida Aishah had been mature enough to serve as a companion and sex partner of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to take on her various responsibilities as his wife. Nikaah with a six year's child, therefore, did not serve any purpose at the time.

As regards the non-virgin she was Sawda bint Zamaa the widow of Sakran (RA) with four orphan children from him. We have already discussed her life and marriage in chapter titled *Wives of the Prophet* ﷺ. She was a bulky woman of 55 years with little womanly charms and attractions. She and her husband had been among the earliest Muslims and great sufferers in the cause of Islam. Besides this, she also excelled in piety and devotion to Islam. After the death of al-Sakran she and the four orphans under her custody deserved restoration of their social status and protection from the Almighty and the Holy Prophet ﷺ. These perhaps were the considerations due to which the Holy

Prophet ﷺ preferred to marry her immediately. This happened about two years before Hijrah.³³³

On agreeing to marry the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Sawda bint Zamaa joined the Holy Prophet ﷺ immediately after her Nikaah. During the remaining life of the Prophet ﷺ, she continued to serve him devotedly and provided solace and comfort to him. Khawla also contacted Abu Bakr the chief companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who put forward two reasons to decline the offer. The first was that he and the Holy Prophet ﷺ happened to be brothers by adoption who according to the traditions of Jahiliyyah had the prohibition on such a relation. The second excuse was that Ayshah had already been betrothed to Jubair bin Mutam bin Addi and the relation could not be cancelled without their permission. In reply to the first objection, the Holy Prophet ﷺ told him that the very purpose of his mission had been to replace the false traditions of Jahilliyyah with the Law of the Lord which did not acknowledge any adopted relation on parity with the biological or the real relations between him and the human beings.

Abu Bakr went to Jubair bin Mut'am and requested him for extermination of the relation. The family being non-believers readily agreed to sever their relationship with Abu Bakr who had already converted to Islam. Abu Bakr cancelled the said relation and gave Ayshah into the Nikaah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Prophet ﷺ solemnized Nikah with Aysha but consummation of her marriage was made about three years later at Medina in Shawwal 1 AH. Muhaddith Muhammad b. Abdullah al-Hakim Nishapuri and the Historian Ibn-e-Saad had quoted from Muhammad b. Umar Waqidhi that Sayyidina Abu Bakr himself had requested the Holy Prophet Muhammad at Medina that:

يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ، مَا يَمْتَنِعُكَ أَنْ تَنْبِيَ بِأَهْلِكَ ؟

In reply to the same, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had said: الصادق i.e. "Dowry" which was lent to him by Abu Bakr and on payment of the same Sayyida Aishah was admitted as life partner of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This shows that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had no urgency or desire for early

³³³ Tareekh-e-Ibn Katheer, Vol. 3 p. 188.

consummation of marriage with Sayyida Aishah. The proposal was initiated by Syyyidina Abu Bakr who being a compassionate father and a rich merchant of Medina had himself put before the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Sayyida Aishah, therefore, must have been in her mature age at the time her father requested the Prophet ﷺ to consume his marriage with her.

Actually Khawla had suggested the alternatives keeping in mind that the Holy Prophet ﷺ may choose one out of them. She, however, might have met with a surprise when the Holy Prophet ﷺ told her to contact both families for the purpose. The reason for marrying both of the women is obvious enough. The prophet ﷺ decided to marry Sawda immediately for providing protection to her and four orphans with her. Being an aged woman, she could also be in a better position to groom the unmarried daughters of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We also know that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had no male heirs after the death of his sons from Khadijah. Since Sawda had already passed the age of procreation, therefore, marriage with Aishah could be expected to provide male heirs to him. Marriage with Aishah could also strengthen the ties between the Holy Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr, the rich and influential member of the Banu Taym tribe of Quraish. Abdurrahman, the eldest son of Abu Bakr could also be counted as a champion of the Quraish like Khalid b. Waleed, Amr b. Al-Aas and Ikrama b. Abi Jahl. Since no male child of the Prophet ﷺ from Sayyida Khadijah had survived her the Prophet ﷺ might also have aspired for some male issues from Sayyida Aishah. These might have been the considerations due to which, the Holy Prophet ﷺ told Khawla to contact both families for the purpose. Aishah also enjoyed the distinction of brilliance, sharp memory and inquisitiveness which were necessary to memorize and interpret the Qur'an. She as a lady in full youth also had the capabilities to keenly observe the pattern of the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and to remember his sayings for transmission to others for a long time after the death of the

Holy Prophet ﷺ. Consequently, she continued to interpret the Qur'an, to preach the faith and transmit the words and actions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to her disciples and the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ including the Tabieen for about 47-48 years after his death.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ also intended to leave behind an academy of women who could serve as interpreters of the Qur'an, transmitters of the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at home and to explain to men as well as women, the jurisprudence about cleanliness from menstruation and child birth etc. No other prophet in the world had left behind such an Academy especially for women to continue transmission of his traditions and precepts of faith among them. Consequently, Umm al-Mumineen, Umm-e-Salama lived up to 61 or 64 AH i.e. 51-54 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and continued to guide men as well as women about problems relating to cleanliness, prayers and fasting etc. Sayyida Aishah too died in 58 AH i.e. about 47-48 years after the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As such, all the wives of the Prophet ﷺ had been proliferating teachings of Islam up to their deaths. The logn living among them had been Safiyah bint Huyay (d. 52 AH), Juwayriah bint Al-Harith (d. 56 AH), Aishah bint Abu Bakr (d.58 AH), Maymuna bint Al-Harith (d. 61 AH) and Umm-e-Salama (d. 61/64 AH).

Comments on The Text of The Hadith:

Omitting other details, we note that sometime after the death of Khadijah-tul-Kubra, Khawla bint Hakim the wife of Uthman b. Mazoon called on the Prophet ﷺ and said O the messenger of God why don't you marry. He said "with whom?", She replied that:

ان شئت بكرا و ان شئت ثيبا قال فمن البكر قالت ابنت احب خلق الله عز و جل اليك
عائشة بنت ابي بكر .

If you like a virgin or you like a non-virgin. He asked so who is the virgin? She replied the daughter of the person who is the most beloved to you among the creatures of the Lord God i.e. Aishah b. Abu Bakr.³³⁴

³³⁴ *Musnad Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal*, Urdu tr. by Mawlana Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Vol. XI (Lahore: Ghazni St. Urdu bazar), p. 474.

(بكر) means a virgin and (ثيبية) means previously married woman. The Prophet ﷺ said who is the virgin? She replied that it is Aishah bint Abi Bakr. About the non-virgin she said it is Sawda bint Zamaa. The Holy Prophet ﷺ advised her to contact both families for the purpose. On receiving positive response from both the families, the Holy Prophet ﷺ solemnized his Nikah with Aisha and also with Sawda bint Zamaa.

There is nothing in the Hadith to deduce that Khawla bint Hakeem was discussing some long term planning with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She was anxious to provide some immediate relief to the problem faced by the messenger of Allah. By referring to البكر (virgin), therefore, she was suggesting a virgin in the marriageable age. Had Aysha been a child of six years she could have provided no immediate relief to the Holy Prophet ﷺ either for companionship, sex satisfaction, looking after the household affairs or even procreation of children.

The Hadith omits the details that Aishah continued to stay with her parents until Shawwal 1 AH but Sawdah joined the Holy Prophet ﷺ immediately after her Nikah with him. It was in the month of Rabi-ul-Awwal 13th Nabavi that the Holy Prophet ﷺ migrated to Medina in the company of Sayidina Abu Bakr, leaving behind their families at Makkah.

A few days after reaching Medina, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had started the construction of Masjid-e-Nabvi and certain small cottages for his own living. It was after completion of Masjid-e-Nabvi that the Holy Prophet ﷺ sent Zaid bin Haritha and Abu Rafe to Mecca to bring both the families to Medina. The next part of the Hadith quotes Sayyida Aishah that when they reached Medina, they stayed with Banu Harith b. Khazraj at "Sunh". **It was there that the Holy Prophet ﷺ went to the house of Abu Bakr before noon and consummated his marriage with Sayyida Aishah as detailed in the Hadith.** The report quoted above ends with the words of Sayyida Aishah that - وأنا يومئذ .

بننت تسع سنين i.e. on that day I was a girl of 9 years. Had the report about 9 years any truth in it, it was natural for a girl of nine lunar years to have some injurious effects of the

sex. We, however, find this description as a narrative of routine showing no signs of a child marriage. Marriage as such must have been consumed during the full youth of Sayyida Aishah.

According to the narrators the prophet ﷺ had visited the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr at 'Sunh' to consume his marriage with Sayyida Aishah late in the morning when many women of Ansar gathered around him. The mother of Sayyida Aishah took her from the swing without telling her anything that was likely to happen. **It means no consent of Aishah** was taken even at that time. We, therefore, find the narrative entirely incompatible with the following Hadith:

Abu Sa'īd al-Khudri reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, was more modest than a virgin in seclusion. If he saw something that he disliked, we would see it on his face.³³⁵

With the exception of certain Ahadith pertaining to the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah we do not find any other example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ consuming his marriage or having sex with his wives before noon while there had been many witnesses to the occasion. It is also doubtful that the consummation of Aishah's marriage was made at the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr. Ibn-e-Saad quotes Sayyida Aishah that:

"and the Holy Prophet ﷺ consumed his marriage with me in the house in which I am living today. He died here and he had opened a door from this house for the purpose of going to Masjid-e-Nabvi.³³⁶

Turning to the words of Sayyida Aishah i.e. *وأنا يومئذ بنت تسع سنين*, Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed has observed that the same may be a later addition or forgery in *Musnad* of Imam Ahmed. We also agree with the observation because had Imam Ahmed been aware of the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 years, he could not have

³³⁵ *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5751, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 2320.

³³⁶ Ibn-e-Saad, *Tabaqaat* (Urdu), Vol. 8, (Deoband: Hafiz Book Depot, UP, Uthmani Brothers), p. 86.

interpreted the age of Buloogh as 9 years instead of insisting on 15 years.

Another point worth consideration is that the Nikah of Sayyida Asma and Sayyida Ayshah were solemnized during the same period of time. Marriage of both the sisters during the same period of time, therefore, supports those historians who suggest that Asma and Aysha daughters of Abu Bakr from two different wives were either of the same age or perhaps Aysha was somewhat senior to Asma because she always referred to Asma merely as her sister than an elder sister.

There is a difference of opinion among the historians about the time of the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Asma. Some of them suggest it before Hijra while others stick on a year or so after Hijra. According to the 2nd group, therefore, the consummation of marriage of Asma with Zubayr b. Awwam and of Aysha with the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ took place during the same year. Consequently, Abdullah b. Zubair was born in Shawwal 2nd Hijrah.³³⁷

In spite of all this, we find no other report about the age of Aysha at the time of her marriage with the Prophet ﷺ. The historians during the late 2nd century AH had, therefore, to rely on Hisham. Later on some compilers of Ahadith followed the same narrative of Hisham son of Urwa and others. The same news was, therefore, incorporated by Imam Bukhari,³³⁸ Imam Muslim,³³⁹ Imam Nasai, Imam Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah who reported the same figures in their Ahadith collections due to which most of the Sunni Muslims took them as valid and correct. We have, therefore, given our reasons for non-reliance in Hisham b.

³³⁷ *Tareekh-e-Tabri*, Vol. 1, p. 146-147.

³³⁸ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā'il ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Mughīrah ibn Bardizbah al-Ju'fī al-Bukhārī (194-256 AH), who authored the Hadith collection known as Sahih Bukhari regarded by Sunni Muslims as one of the most authentic (sahih) Hadith collections.

³³⁹ Abū al-Ḥusayn 'Asākir ad-Dīn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj ibn Muslim ibn Ward ibn Kawshādh al-Qushayrī an-Naysābūrī (200-261 AH) His hadith collection, known as Sahih Muslim, is one of the six major hadith collections in Sunni Islam.

Urwa's belated report and his shortcomings during his end times when he was suffering not only from blindness but loss of temper, memory and senses.

Following the Muhaddithing Muslim Historians had also been trying to report each and every detail of the genesis of Islam and events for about 800 years, thereafter. We are, therefore, giving a list of the great historians of Islam in the following:

	Name	Date/Place of Birth (AH)	Date/Place of Death (AH)
1	Ibn Ishaq	85/Medina	150/Baghdad
2	Ibn Saad	168/Basra	230/Baghdad
3	Ibn Jareer Tabri	224/Amol, Tabristan	310/Baghdad
4	Ibn Katheer	701/Bosra, Syria	774/Damascus

Although most of the Sunni Muslims ascribe presumption of truth to the Ahadith quoted above yet keeping in view the conflation between these Ahadith and certain other Ahadith in the *Sihah Sittah* and also injunctions of the Qur'an, we cannot take them as statements of truth. We, therefore, observe that:

1. While studying Sahih Bukhari, Shabir Ahmed Azhar had pointed out that in the Ahadith narrated by Hisham bin Urwa the word *بعد العشر* had been omitted by Hisham bin Urwa either due to some mistake or loss of his memory at the age of about 84-86 years. Referring to Hafiz Ibn Kathir he argues that Hadhrat Asma was about ten years older than Aysha. All the historians agree that she died in 73 AH at the age of 100 years. She was about 27 years at the time of Hijrah. Even if Sayyida Aishah had been 10 years younger than her, she must have been of about 17 years at that time. Accordingly, she might have been 18-19 years old at the time of her joining the Holy Prophet ﷺ in about two Hijra. Shabir Ahmed further argues that it was at Medina when Abu Bakr himself asked the Prophet ﷺ that:

ما يمنعك ان تبني باهلك

What prevents you from joining with your wife?

According to the scholars, Abu Bakr could have uttered such words only if Ayshah had gained full maturity by that time. Aishah had undoubtedly been the beloved daughter of

Abu Bakr, a rich merchant of the time. He had no compulsion to throw away or abandon his beloved daughter to get rid of poverty or to repay some debt. She had opened her eyes in the ideal Islamic atmosphere where she peacefully learnt Arabic poetry and genealogies from Abu Bakr which was impossible for a child of 7 to 8 years. Abu Bakr had no compulsion to send Aishah away before her maturity. Sayyida Aishah's Nikah and consummation of marriage, therefore, occurred after her full maturity. As such, there could be no possibility of her being exposed to child abuse as implied by the Ahadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa and others.

Although Asma, the elder daughter of Abu Bakr had been betrothed to Zubayr bin Awwam before Hijra, yet she too had not joined with him till Zubayr's return to Medina from Syria/ Palestine. Abdullah b. Zubayr, his son was born in Shawwal 2 AH when Sayyida Asma might have been 28-29 years old. We, therefore, do not understand the emergency due to which Abu Bakr had suggested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to consume his marriage with Ayshah a child of 9 years.

Since such an instance had been non-existent among the prophets from Adam to Jesus Christ, therefore, we cannot rely on the narrative describing tender age of Sayyida Aishah. The narrative about her age, therefore, becomes doubtful. Shabir Ahmed Azher had also quoted various instances where according to him, Urwa might have heard some Ahadith from other persons but he in turn preferred to narrate the same directly from Aysha. (For details, please see '*Sahih Bukhari ka Mutalia*' (Urdu) by Shabir Ahmed Azhar, Vol. II, p. 85-87).

As such, if Aysha had joined the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the age of 9 and she was less than 19 years even at the time of his death, she could be taken only as a teenager than a sagacious woman with great learning and authority on traditions of the Prophet ﷺ and jurisprudence of Islam. Her teenage, therefore, also impairs the consensus of the Islamic historians regarding vast knowledge of Aysha about history, poetry and her exceeding competence to narrate at least 2210 Ahadith from the Holy Prophet. This also eclipses the reports that many worthy companions of the

Holy Prophet had been consulting her for solution of the complicated problems.

Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed has also given his comments on all other Ahadith included in Sihah Khamsa, *Kitab-ul-Umm*, *Musnad* Imam Ahmed and Sunan-e-Kubra by Bayhqi. According to him each of these Ahadith suffers from different Lacuna as pointed out in the pages 89–235 of his Book.

PROMINENT FIGURES IN THE CHAIN OF NARRATORS

Prof. Muhammad Tahir Ali Hashmi had counted only 15 reports from various persons towards bottom of the Isnad. These included twelve Ahadith containing the Isnad ending in "Hisham b. Urwa from Urwa from Sayyida Aishah". The 2nd report from Imam Bukhari³⁴⁰ originates from Urwa b. Zubair (حدثنا ابو اسامه عن هشام عن ابيه) without any reference of having heard it from Sayyida Aishah or some other companion of the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, the Hadith at Number 5 of Imam Bukhari³⁴¹ also contains the Isnad i.e. (حدثنا سفيان عن هشام عن عروه). As such, this Hadith also does not mention Sayyida Aishah or any other companion as narrator of the Hadith. The Hadith had been revealed at Kufah by Hisham b. Urwa for the first time in 145 AH i.e. about 144 years after the event. Since the news were not known to anyone in the world till then, therefore, we can attach no credibility to the statement of Hisham b. Urwa during his superannuation and loss of sight as well as memory. We also know that Nikaah is a widely proclaimed event among the Muslim society due to which thousands and thousands of the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ should have reported about the same. As such, the report from singular source of Sayyida Aishah must be treated as Khabar-e-Wahid. Its receipt after concealment of about 145 years also destroys its credibility. Both Sayyidina Abu Bakr and Uthman had insisted on 2nd witness or two witnesses even in a case where one of the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been quoting some tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Even, otherwise, the report being libellous against the Holy Prophet ﷺ accusing him of having sex with a child (prepubescent or pre-buloogh girl) needed four witnesses to prove it as per the commandment of the Lord (Al-Qur'an 24:11-20). The verses have been quoted by us

³⁴⁰ Vol. 5, Book 58, Hadith No. 236.

³⁴¹ Vol. 7, Book 62, Hadith No. 88.

in our chapter 'God's Warnign to the Believers'. The reports about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah received publicity during 185-189 AH i.e. long after the death of the primary narrators of the same. Due to lack of verification, therefore, the reports have no credibility at all.

Lack of credibility had perhaps been the main reason that in spite of inclusion of certain Ahadith firstly in Sahih Bukhari in about 232 AH and lastly in Sunan-e-Nasai about 302 AH, the traditions had no impact on Islamic jurisprudence which had been codified by the death of Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal in 241 AH. Since the tradition about the age of Sayyida Aishah had been unknown to the people of Makkah, Medina, Hijaz, Egypt, Syria and other parts of the Islamic world up to the end of the 2nd century AH, majority of the Muslims attached no credence to the same. Those who came to know about this Hadith during the 2nd half of the 3rd century AH seem to have ignored it as a fake Hadith due to the fact that it was against the collective practice of the Sahaba and many generations thereafter. **Imam Malik used to reject all Ahadith which had not been acted upon by the Sahaba, the Tabieen or Majority of the Muslims.**³⁴² Hence, in spite of existence of the Hadith in the Sihah, it had never been acted upon by the Muslim community from the genesis of Islam till today. Hence the hue and cry of the Western critics alleging child abuse by the Muslim community is entirely baseless.

Professor Tahir Ali Hashmi has provided the list of fifteen persons narrating the Ahadith from Hisham b. Urwa. Except from Urwa only Aswad (b. Yazeed) is the other traditionist who reports the news directly from Sayyida Aishah:

No.	Reporter	From	Died	Included in
1	Sufyan Thawri	Kufa	161 AH	Sahih Bukhari
2	Ali b. Mus'hir	Kufa	189 AH	Sahih Bukhari
3	Sufyan b. Uyayna	Kufa	198 AH	Sahih Bukhari
4	Abu Usama	Kufa	201 AH	Sahih Bukhari
5	Abu Bakr bin Abi Shayba	Kufa	235 AH	Sahih Muslim
6	Muhammad b. al Alaa Abu Kurayb	Kufa	248 AH	Sahih Muslim
7	Abu Muawia	Kufa	195 AH	Sahih Muslim

³⁴² Sheikh Muhammad Khidri Bak, *Tareekh-e-Fiqh-e-Islami* (Urdu), tr. by Maulana Habib Ahmed Hashmi, (Karachi: Dar-ul-Ishaat, opposite Maulvi Musafir Khana, 1979), p. 310.

Ch. 11 – Prominent Figures in the Chain of Narrators²⁷¹

8	Abda b. Sulayman	Kufa	187 AH	Sahih Muslim
9	Ubayb b. Hameed	Kufa	190 AH	Sahih Muslim
10	Aswad b. Yazeed	Kufa	75 AH	Sahih Muslim
11	Yunus b. Bukayr	Kufa	199 AH	Sunan Byhqi
12	Wakee b. Jarrah	Kufa	201 AH	Sunan Byhqi
13	Wuhayb	Basra	165 AH	Sahih Bukhari
14	Hammad b. Zayd	Basra	181 AH	Sunan Abi Dawood
15	Hammad b. Salama	Basra	167 AH	Musnad Ahmed
16	Jafar b. Sulayman	Basra	178 AH	Sunan Nasai

It is, therefore, evident from the above that fifteen out of sixteen persons reporting about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah were the disciples of Hisham son of Urwa transmitting the news from him. They included 11 persons from Kufah and four from Basra. Aswad from Kufah had been a Tabiee who died in 75 AH when Hisham was just 14 years old. He, therefore, was not in a position to report anything from Hisham b. Urwa. Although both Aswad and Ibraheem Nakhii (50-96 AH) were reliable reporters yet Aamash (61-148 AH) had been Mudallis (One who did not name his teacher), Mursil (who narrates Ahadith where the narrator between the Successor and Muhammad is omitted) and Ghali Shia.³⁴³ For further details please refer to page 109-110 of the aforestated book of Hakeen Nyaz Ahmed. In any case, it is clear that the 6/9 years report attributed to Hisham b. Urwa did not exist anywhere in the Islamic world before 145 AH. Subsequently, it was Ali b. Mus'hir Kufi who publicised it during 185-189 AH after keeping it secret for about 39 years since the death of Hisham in 146 AH.

Brief Comments on Prominent Figures

Although, we cannot cover all the narrators of the Hadith here yet it may be useful to describe some of the important figures in the Ahadith quoted by us. Sayyida Aishah being the central figure in these Ahadith had already been

³⁴³ Minority Shia Muslim groups who ascribe divine characteristics to Sayyidina Ali and some of his descendants.

discussed in detail. Out of the remaining prominent narrators we start with the following:

1. Urwa b. Zubayr

He was Urwa (23-94 AH) b. Zubayr b. Awwam b. Khuwaylid b. Asad b. Abdul Uzza b. Qusai bin Kilab. Urwa's father **Zubayr b. Awwam married eight times** and had twenty children. Asma bint Abi Bakr, the step sister of Aishah Siddiqah, had been the most illustrious wife of Zubayr who bore him eight children i.e. 1) Abdullah, 2) Al-Mundhir, 3) Asim, 4) Al-Muhajir, 5) Khadija the Elder, 6) Umm Al-Hasan, 7) Aisha and 8) Urwa.

Zubayr (r.a.) and Asma were married before the Hijra of 622 AD and divorced around 24-25 AH (645 AD) when Urwa was an infant of 1 or 2 years. The eldest and the most prominent among their children had been Abdullah b. Zubayr (2-73 AH) who upon the accession of Yazid I, refused to give his oath of his allegiance to him. By declaring himself as successor to the rightly guided Caliphs, he became the counter-caliph at Makkah w.e.f. 61 AH. In 73 AH i.e. during the reign of Abd al-Malik b. Marwan, Hajjaj b. Yousuf besieged Makkah. Besides destroying certain parts of Ka'aba, he defeated and killed Abdullah b. Zubayr along with his companions there. About three weeks after his assassination, Abdullah's mother Asma too died at the age of 100 years.

Urwa b. Zubayr was about 21 years younger than Abdullah. He happened to be one of the seven eminent jurists of Medina but **some scholars count him among the jurists of Shia**.³⁴⁴ His disciples include Hisham his son, Imam Hammad b. Abi Salman and according to some scholars Imam Zuhri. Due to his collection and subsequent study of historical reports, Urwa is taken as founder of historical study of Islam. Historians also describe him as the first biographer of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ having written '*Tract of Sirah*' which though not extant today is known through Ibn Ishaq. Most of the traditions transmitted by him have been reported through Ibn Shahab Zuhri (50-124 AH) and others. Although, Zuhri had

³⁴⁴ Abdullah Sarim al-Azhari of Egypt, *Tareekh-ul-Qur'an*, (Urdu), p. 197.

narrated many Ahadith from Sayyida Aishah through Urwa b. Zubair yet scholars unanimously deny Zuhri's Liqaa or Simaa (having seen or heard) about Urwa. It is said that during the last years of Muawiah's caliphate i.e. towards 60 AH or 680 AD Urwa used to meet his friends every night in the mosque of Medina to form a scholarly circle to discuss various issues. Urwa had good relations with Umayyad Caliphs such as Muawiyah, Abd al-Malik and with Umar b. Abd al-Aziz during his governance of Medina.

Urwa had been known as a trustworthy transmitter of Ahadith, a pious person characterized as possessing inexhaustible Sea of knowledge. The Brill's *Encyclopedia of Islam* records that:

Urwa, being a (late) Tabi'i or Successor, belongs to the first generation of scholars in Islam who systematically collected traditions. **His Isnads do not always fulfil the later requirements; at times, he does not mention his authority at all.** Two-thirds of the traditions in the 'Urwa corpus go back to 'Aisha as his direct informant; however, **in some cases the suspicion is warranted that the Isnad was extended backwards to 'Aisha in the later course of transmission** (cf. von Stulpnagel, 119).³⁴⁵

It has been further added that:

Urwa wrote down the hadith, collected by him, at least in part. He is said to have destroyed all his kutub fikh (see above). According to one version of this report, the reason for this is said to have been his qualms not to create another book alongside the Kur'an (*al-Dhahabi*, Siyar, iv, 436).³⁴⁶

Urwa had 10 sons and 7 daughters i.e. Abdullah, Umar, Aswad, Umm Kalthum, Aysha, Umm Umar, Yahya, Muhammad, Uthman, Abu Bakr, Khadijah, Hisham, Safiya, Ubaydullah, Musab, Umm e Yahya, Asma. **Yahya had been acknowledged as the most famous scholar of Islam among the descendants of Urwa.** It is, however, strange that out of 17 sons and daughters of Urwa, Hisham

³⁴⁵ E. J. Brill, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1991, Vol. 10, p. 911, s.v. 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr'.

³⁴⁶ E. J. Brill, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 911-912.

had been the only person who claimed having heard the Hadith about the age of Aysha at the time of her Nikah and the consummation of marriage from Urwa. None of the other sons or daughters of Urwa knew about it. **With the exception of Hisham his son, no disciple or companion of Urwa at Makkah or Medina had heard the Hadith about the age of Aishah from him.** Hisham had been the only one among the descendants of Urwa who transmitted this Hadith during his third and last visit to Kufa during 144-146 AH. Hisham by then had attained 85-86 years of age and was suffering from loss of eyesight, temper, senses and memory. More about him in the following:

2. Hisham bin Urwa

Urwa b. Zubayr had 17 offspring and Hisham is counted at number 12 among them. He was born in 61 AH and died at Baghdad Iraq in 146 AD at the age of 86 years. Ibn Hazam writes about him that:

امہ ام ولد اسمہا صفیہ خراسانیہ

His mother was an Umm-e-Walad and her name was 'Safia Khurasania'.

According to other writers her name was Sarah.³⁴⁷ Hisham had seen Sahaba like Ibn Umar, Anas bin Malik, and Hazrat Jabir b. Abdullah. Except for visiting Iraq thrice, he spent his entire life at Medina. During the major part of his earlier life, he continued to enjoy the reputation as a pious person and authentic reporter of Ahadith. Even Imam Malik and others had been accepting various narratives from him and after corroborating the same with other sources, they used to include his narratives in their collections. Zahabi, therefore, reported that Hisham had an excellent memory during his youth and thereafter but during his old age, he failed to narrate the Ahadith correctly. Even before his third and last visit to Iraq during the caliphate of Abu Jaafar Mansoor, he had started amalgamating various narratives besides attributing many other reports to his father Urwa.

³⁴⁷ Prof. Qazi Muhammad Tahir Ali Hashmi, *Umar-e-Aysha par Tahqeeqi Nazar* (Urdu), p. 273.

As regards the Hadith about the age of Sayyida Aysha at the time of the consummation of her marriage, no one from Medina reported this Hadith from Hisham.

Hisham b. Urwa had borrowed huge amounts of money and towards the end of his life his creditors at Medina started pressing him hard to repay the debts. As such, the pressure of the creditors with the lack of sources to repay the debt had caused some disorder in his temper as well as memory. He, therefore, started mixing up various events besides attributing most of the reports heard from others to Urwa his father. This was the reason that Imam Malik and other scholars of Medina started disliking and avoiding him. According to some critics, **the figure of 9 had overwhelmed his mind to such an extent that he had started making extensive use of it ignoring the true figures.** One of the examples was that he claimed to have consumed his marriage with Fatima bint Mundhir when she was just 9 years old. The readers may, however, note that after Abdullah, Mundhir had been the 2nd eldest son of Zubayr while Urwa being the youngest of them was born after his father's death.

Fatimah, daughter of Mundhir had been acknowledged as a great Faqeeh and scholar of Ahadith who narrated many Ahadith from her grandmother Sayyida Asma bint Abu Bakr. Hisham claimed to be the only disciple of Fatimah to transmit many Ahadith from her. Hisham in fact had been born in 61 AH while his wife Fatimah bint al-Mundhir bin Zubayr bin Awwam was born in 48 AH. She was, therefore, 13 years older than him. **Factually she was 29 years old at the time of the consummation of her marriage with Hisham.** Hisham's report about consummation of his marriage showing her to be of 9 years, therefore, suggests droppage of the word عشرين from his narrative. **Many scholars suggest repetition of the same insanity in his report about the age of Sayyida Aisha.** She too might have been 29 or 19 years old at the time of consummation of her marriage but Hisham reported it just 9 years in the manner he reported about his own wife. Obviously there could be no possibility of the consummation of Hisham's marriage with Fatimah 4 years

before his own birth. According to Hafiz Ibn Hajar³⁴⁸, Hisham had himself acknowledged that:

قال هشام بن عروه كانت أكبر مني بثلاث عشر سنة فيكون مولدها سنة ثمان و اربعين-

Hisham bin Urwa said that she was 13 years older than me thus her time of birth is 48 AH.

Such statements from him, therefore, suggested development of insanity in him. Scholars reported that when in the old age Hisham went to Iraq, he had lost major part of his memory and he had also been reported having talked nonsense. Subsequent to such disorder, Imam Malik started not only to avoid Hisham but also to declare that: "*Hisham bin Urwa Kazzab*". Hakeem Mahmood Ahmed Zafar also reports **Muhammad b. Ishaq as Kazzab along with Hisham b. Urwa** (Vol. I of *Tareekh-e-Baghdad*, cited by Ummahat-al-Mumineen Urdu by Hakeem Mehmood Ahmed Zafar p. 103). Similarly, Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed recorded that **Imam Malik considered Muhammad b. Ishaq and Hisham b. Urwa at the same level of unreliability**³⁴⁹ **during the last periods of their lives**. In support of his argument, the afore-stated author has quoted instances of some self-contradictory reports from Hisham who used to become outraged during that time. For details please see *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, p. 158-173.

After conducting a thorough research about the origin of this Hadith at Kufa Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed of Sargodha Pakistan had arrived at the conclusion that the Hadith had actually been fabricated by Ali b. Mus'hir one of the disciples of Hisham at Kufah. It was he who publicized it by ascribing it to Hisham b. Urwa b. Zubayr about 40 years after the death of Hisham. The fabricators had always been ascribing the forged Ahadith to the most reliable chain of narrators to make it credible for others. Ali b. Mus'hir might also have ascribed his own fabrication to Hisham b. Urwa from Zubayr from Ayshah which consisted of such a chain of narrators that no body could dare to deny its veracity.

³⁴⁸ See page 175 of *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha-Siddiqa* (Urdu) by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

³⁴⁹ See comments at number 10, page 166, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha-Siddiqa*.

Being in dire need of money, Hisham had to make his third visit to Iraq (145-146 A.H.) with an aim to get some grant from the Caliph Abu Jaafar al-Mansoor to repay his debts. He, therefore, was counted among his courtiers till his death in 146 AH. The narrative about the age of Aysha at the time of the consummation of her marriage pertains to the period of the third and last visit of Hisham to Kufah in Iraq in about 145 AH. Besides some mental disorder, Hisham had also become blind by that time. He, however, had eight disciples from Kufah and four from Basra.

As pointed out earlier, Hisham had spent major part of his life at Medina but Muhaddithin fail to mention the name of any of his disciples there. It was only at Iraq that he had 8 pupils from Kufa and about four from Basra the detail of which has been produced on pg 261 of the book *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah*. Most of the subsequent reporters of the Hadith pertaining to 6-9 years age of Aysha had been the Iraqis reporting it only from Hisham b. Urwa. Although Imam Muslim had reported the Hadith with the Isnad of Abdurrazaq, Maamar, and Imam Zuhri (d. 124 AH) who reported it from Urwa yet the same has been treated incredible because scholars unanimously deny Zuhri's لقاء و سماع (seeing or hearing) from Urwa. The Hadith also loses its credibility due to the fact that Abdurrazaq had been a Shiite scholar known for fabrication of Ahadith and making different insertions in them.

The narrative had originated firstly at Iraq in 145 AH and publicized by Ali b. Mushir in 185 AH at Kufa. He was the person whose books had been buried along with his corpse to fulfill his own will. Prior to him, we find no collection of Ahadith containing the report about the age of Aishah. Hence, instead of خبر متواتر اولين i.e. the famous and commonly known report from the earliest believers at Makkah, Medina and Hijaz, it can be taken as خبر واحد الاخرين i.e. the singular report from later people i.e. belonging to the end of 2nd century AH and thereafter at Kufa, Basra and Baghdad. To accept it as an inerrant or infallible report will, therefore, be super-imposition of later news to reconstruct the life history of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ retrospectively.

Since, Hisham b. Urwa also bore the influence of Imam Jaafar Sadiq the 6th Imam of the Shiites, therefore, Ali b.

Mushir himself a Shiite disciple of Hisham might have exploited his name to accord authenticity to his own fabrication as shall be discussed subsequently. Kufa contained the largest number of Shiaan Ali who had grudge against Sayyida Ayshah due to her opposition against the assassigators of Khalifa Uthman b. Affan who had taken refuge under the banners of Sayyidina Ali b. Abi Talib. The conflict culminated in the battle of Camel in 36 AH in which Sayyida Aysha had been leading the army against Sayyidina Ali. It was, therefore, to undermine the personality of Sayyida Aysha as a mature scholar of Islam and an authority on Islamic jurisprudence that the Kufi reporters depicted her just as a teenager even up to the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This also aims at damaging the authenticity of 2210 Ahadith reported by her.

3. Ibn Ishaq

Muhammad b. Ishaq (85-151 AH) had been the grand son of a Christian man of Kufa by name of Yasaar who was taken to Medina after being captured during one of Khalid bin Walid's (RA) campaigns. His father Ishaq had married the daughter of another maula from whom Ibn Ishaq was born. It is said that he had seen Hazrat Anas b. Malik Khazraji (r.a.). The Wikipedia reports about him that:

Around the age of 30, Ibn Ishaq arrived in Alexandria and studied under Yazid ibn Habib. After his return to Medina, based on one account, he was ordered out of Medina for attributing a hadith to a woman he had not met (Fāṭima bint al-Mundhir, wife of Hishām ibn Urwa). But those who defended him, like Sufyan ibn Uyaynah, stated that Ibn Ishaq told them that he did meet her. Also ibn Ishaq disputed with the young Malik ibn Anas, famous for the Maliki School of Fiqh. Leaving Medina (or forced to leave), he traveled eastwards towards what is now Iraq, stopping in Kufa, also al-Jazīra, and into Iran as far as Ray, before returning west. Eventually he settled in Baghdad. There, the new Abbasid dynasty, having overthrown the Umayyad caliphs, was establishing a new capital.³⁵⁰

³⁵⁰ Wikipedia, s.v. Ibn Ishaq.

After collecting the oral traditions about the life of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Ibn-e-Ishaq had dictated the same to his pupils. These traditions are known collectively as *Seeratu Rasoolillah* but survive only in other sources among which the *Seerat* edited by **Abu Muhammad Abd al-Malik Ibn Hisham b. Ayyub al-Humairi al-Afri** (d. 213/218 AH) is the main document extant today. At page 8 of the Urdu edition of the said book³⁵¹, we find additional information that originally, *Kitab-al-Maghazi* had been compiled by Imam Zuhri who had collected the relevant information from a companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and by inquiring it from different inhabitants of Medina. Ibn-e-Ishaq being a disciple of Imam Zuhri had collected most of the traditions of *Sirah* from him. **No doubt Urwa b. Zubayr (23-94 AH) had lived for about 44 years during the life of Imam Zuhri (50-124 AH) yet according to the scholars Zuhri had neither seen nor heard anything directly from him.** As such, Zuhri's narratives from Urwa b. Zubayr lose their strength. Ibn-e-Ishaq, however, had another source i.e. Hisham b. Urwa to revalidate his traditions. Hisham bin Urwa also did not hold good opinion about Muhammad bin Ishaq. He said that all narratives of Ibn Ishaq from Fatima bint Munzir, the wife of Ibn Hisham are incorrect because Ibn Ishaq never had the chance to see or hear Fatima. At one occasion, he went up to declaring that Ibn Ishaq is:

الكذاب كذب الخبيث

The greatest liar, (telling) wicked lies.

عدو الله الكذاب - يروى عن امرأتى اين راها-

The greatest Liar, enemy of of Allah, reports from my wife, 'where did he see her'?

(*Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, p. 165)

According to another report Ibn Hisham b. Ayyub's (d. 213/218 AH) knowledge of Ibn Ishaq's biography was

³⁵¹ *Seerat Ibn Hisham*, tr. by Sheikh Muhammad Ishmaeel Panipati, (Maqbool Academy, Chowk Anarkali, Lahore, Pakistan).

derived from Ziyād al-Baqqā'i (d. 183/799), who lived mostly in Kufa. Later on, Ibn Hisham's *As-Sira* would chiefly be transmitted by his pupil, Ibn al-Barqī.³⁵² His full name was Ahmad b. Muḥammad b. Khālid b. Abd al-Raḥmān al-Barqī (b. 200 d. 274/280). He was a **renowned Twelver Shi'a hadith scholar** (muhaddith) and historian of 3rd century AH. Al-Barqī was born around 200 AH in Kufa. His father was a disciple of Imam al-Kazim, Imam al-Rida, and Imam al-Jawad and a scholarly man. He was called al-Barqī because his ancestor, Ahmad, settled in the Barqrud area of Qom. Among al-Barqī's family members were several traditionists and scholars of jurisprudence and hadith.³⁵³ According to certain reports both Shi'a and Sunni scholars relied on Ahadith transmitted by him. Some scholars have been of the opinion that Al-Barqī used to narrate from unreliable narrators and take mursal Hadith as reliable Hadith. Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Isa al-Ashari, the head of the Hadith scholars of Qom had, therefore, banished him from Qom. According to Shia sources, Ahmed had later on felt sorry for the said banishment and also joined funeral prayer of Al-Barqī. The most important work of Al-Barqī is known as *al-Mahasin*.

The Wikipedia reports that:

Ibn Hisham also "abbreviated, annotated, and sometimes altered" the text of Ibn Ishaq, according to Guillaume³⁵⁴ (at p. xvii). **Interpolations made by Ibn Hisham are said to be recognizable and can be deleted**, leaving as a remainder, a so-called "edited" version of Ibn Ishaq's original text (otherwise lost). In addition, Guillaume (at p. xxxi) points out that Ibn Hisham's version omits various narratives in the text which were given by al-Tabari in his History. In these passages al-Tabari expressly cites Ibn Ishaq as a source.

³⁵² Montgomery Watt, W. (1968). "Ibn Hishām". *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Vol. 3 (2nd ed.). Brill Academic Publishers. pp. 800–801.

³⁵³ *Wikishia.com*, s.v. 'Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Khalid al-Barqī'.

³⁵⁴ Alfred Guillaume DD (1888–1965) was a British Arabist, scholar of Islam and Hebrew Bible / Old Testament scholar. He coauthored with Sir Thomas Arnold, *The Legacy of Islam*, and also translated Ibn Ishaq's "Sirah Rasul Allah", published as *The Life of Muhammad*. A translation of Ishaq's "*Sirat Rasul Allah*".

Thus can be reconstructed an 'improved' "edited" text, i.e., by distinguishing or removing Ibn Hisham's additions, and by adding from al-Tabari passages attributed to Ibn Ishaq. Yet the result's **degree of approximation to Ibn Ishaq's original text can only be conjectured**. Such a reconstruction is available, e.g., in Guillaume's translation. Here, Ibn Ishaq's introductory chapters describe pre-Islamic Arabia, before he then commences with the narratives surrounding the life of Muhammad (in Guillaume at pp. 109–690).

Notable scholars like the jurist Ahmad ibn Hanbal appreciated his efforts in collecting *sīra* narratives and accepted him on *maghāzī*, despite having **reservations on his methods on matters of fiqh**. Ibn Ishaq also influenced later *sīra* writers like Ibn Hishām and Ibn Sayyid al-Nās. Other scholars, like Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya (691-751 AH), made use of his chronological ordering of events.

The most widely discussed criticism of his *sīra* was that of his contemporary **Mālik ibn Anas**. Mālik rejected the stories of Muhammad and the Jews of Medina on the ground that they were taken solely based on accounts by sons of Jewish converts. These same stories have also been denounced as "odd tales" (*gharāib*) later by **ibn Hajar al-Asqalani**.³⁵⁵ Mālik and others also thought that **ibn Ishaq exhibited Qadari tendencies, had a preference for Ali** (Guillaume also found evidence of this, pp. xxii & xxiv), and relied too heavily on what were later called the *Isrā'īliyyāt*. Furthermore, early literary critics, like ibn Sallām al-Jumāl and ibn al-Nadīm, censured ibn Ishāq for knowingly including forged poems in his biography, and for attributing poems to persons not known to have written any poetry. The 14th-century historian al-Dhahabī, using hadith terminology, noted that **in addition to the forged (makdhūb) poetry, Ibn Ishāq filled his sīra with many munqatī (broken chain of narration) and munkar (suspect narrator) reports**.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁵ Shihāb al-Dīn Abu 'l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. Nūr al-Dīn 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Hajar al-'Asqalānī (1372-1449 AD [776-852 A.H]) was a medieval Shafiite Sunni Muslim scholar of Islam" who wrote approximately one hundred and fifty books on hadith, hadith terminology, biographical evaluation, history, Quranic exegesis, poetry and Shafi'i jurisprudence. In the present context, we highlight his books on the final summation of the science of Ahadith and Fath-al-Bari i.e. the commentary of Sahih Bukhari.

³⁵⁶ Wikipedia, s.v. '*Ibn Ishaq*'.

Reliability of Hadith from Ibn Ishaq

The Wikipedia also contains that:

In hadith studies, ibn Ishaq's hadith (considered separately from his prophetic biography) is generally thought to be "good" (hasan) (assuming an accurate and trustworthy isnad, or chain of transmission) and himself having a reputation of being "sincere" or "trustworthy" (ṣadūq). However, **a general analysis of his isnads has given him the negative distinction of being a mudallis**, meaning one who did not name his teacher, claiming instead to narrate directly from his teacher's teacher. Because of his tadlīs, many scholars including Muhammad al-Bukhari hardly ever used his narrations in their Sahih books. According to al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, **all scholars of ahadith except one no longer rely on any of his narrations**, although truth is not foreign to him. **Others, like Ahmad ibn Hanbal, rejected his narrations on all matters related to fiqh**. Al-Dhahabī concluded that despite his good qualities any narration solely transmitted through him should probably be considered as containing munkar, for **there is an issue with his memorizing**. He added that some Imams mentioned him, including Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, who cited five of Ibn Ishaq's ahadith in his Sahih.

Imam Malik bin Anas counted him among the Shites and those who forged many stories and poems.³⁵⁷ Scholars of Ahadith, therefore, generally observe that the narratives from Ibn Ishaq are Dhaeef.³⁵⁸

As regards the Ahadith about Nikah or consummation of marriage of a child (immature girl) the same cannot be counted merely as a matter of history or routine event as per norms of the society. On the contrary, it suggests a great amendment in the sirah of the Prophet ﷺ being a matter of Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) about which majority of the the Aimmah had discarded reports of Ibn-e-Ishaq as incredible. We may also add that Ibn Ishaq had not been counted authentic even by Imam Nasai. According to Dar-al-Qutni, his narratives cannot be taken as a proof. Imam Abu Dawood mentioned him as Qadari and Mutazilite.

³⁵⁷ Daira-tul-Maarif Islamia (Urdu), Vol. I, s.v. 'Ibn Ishaq', p. 421.

³⁵⁸ Prof. Abdussaharn Azhari, *Tareekh-ul-Hadith*, (Urdu) (Lahore: Maktaba Mueen-ul-Adab, Urdu Bazar, 1963), p. 149.

Khateeb Baghdadi Said that Muhammad b. Ishaq reports from unknown narrators.³⁵⁹

At page 149 of his book i.e. *Tareekh-ul-Hadith* (Urdu) Professor Abdussamad Sarim al-Azhari has stated that Imam Bukhari rejected 10 thousand Ahadith from a person due to certain doubts about him. He further writes that Muhaddithin accord greatest credibility to reports from Ali b. Madiani, Yahya b. Mueen and Abdullah b. Mubarak while **they consider reports from Muhammad b. Ishaq as Dhaeef** (weak or incredible).

It is said that while editing *Sīrat Rasūl Allāh* from Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham³⁶⁰ reported the age of Ayshah at the time of her Nikah as 6 years and consummation of her marriage at the age of 9 years. According to the said Seerat edited or compiled by Ibn Hisham, Ibn Ishaq had reported the same on the authority of Urwa bin Zubair (22/23-94 AH) who instead of a companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was one of the Tabi'in. He reported having heard the Hadith from his maternal aunt Sayyida Aysha. Later on Hisham son of Urwa transmitted it further to his disciples. After thorough scrutiny of the Isnad about this Hadith, **Ibn Kathir** (701-774 AH) treated it as Mursal from Urwa b. Zubayr i.e. where a narrator between the successor and the Holy Prophet ﷺ is omitted from the given Isnād. To add to the tragedy, we know that even Ibn Ishaq's work did not reach the successors directly. There had been intermediaries like Ziyād al-Baqqā'i, Ibn Hisham, and Ibn al-Barqi as detailed by us above. Since the report had originated very late at Kufah and it continued to be narrated and further transmitted there up to 274/280 i.e. till the death of Ibn al-Barqi the renowned twelver Shia Scholar of Hadith narrating from unreliable persons, therefore, we take the 6/9 years report about the marriage of Sayyida Aishah as a mere fabrication than an established fact.

³⁵⁹ Prof. Qazi Muhammad Tahir Ali Hashmi, *Umar-e-Aysha par Tahqeeqi Nazar* (Urdu), (Lahore: J. M. Art Press, Urdu Bazar, 2011), p. 221-222.

³⁶⁰ His full name was Abu Muhammad Abdul Malik bin Hisham bin abu al-Humairi Al Amiri al Basri. He was born in Basra and died in 213 AH or 218 AH (*Seerat Ibn Hisham* (Urdu), tr. by Sheikh Muhammad Ismaeel Pani Patti, Maqbook Academy Lahore).

4. Ali b. Mus'hir:

Ali b. Mus'hir (116-189 AH) had been one of the eight disciples of Hisham b. Urwa at Kufa. Farwa of Kufa (d. 225 AH) was a disciple of Ali b. Mus'hir. Imam Bukhari had reported the Hadith from Farwa which he might have heard from him after 220 AH. Although, we do not find any report about the credibility and characteristics of Farwa, yet we believe that Imam Bukhari might have found him trustworthy for transmission of the Hadith.

Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed of Sargodha Pakistan conducted thorough research about the age of sayyida Aysha at the time of the consummation of her marriage. **The end product was a voluminous book covering about 671 pages in which he examined critically each and every Hadith in the Sihah Sittah and Musnad etc. referring to the age of Sayyida Aysha.** He arrived at the conclusion that Ali b. Mus'hir had been the first transmitter to publicise the report about the age of Aysha as 9 years at the time of the consummation of her marriage. This happened in 185 AH i.e. about 40 years after the death of Hisham b. Urwa when no one else could endorse or rebut the report. Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed, therefore, opines that the narrative had not originated from Hisham b. Urwa. According to him, Ali b. Mus'hir had been the inventor or fabricator of this Hadith who transmitted it to others at Kufah in about 185 AH and thereafter. No other person has reported this Hadith with the details of Ali b. Mus'hir from Hisham b. Urwa. The '*Muwattah*' compiled by Imam Malik, therefore, contains no report about the age of Aysha as incorporated in *Sihah Sittah*. It is also said that Imam Abu Hanifa also had met Hisham b. Urwa but knew nothing about this Hadith.

In the absence of any other source to corroborate the report of Ali b. Mus'hir, Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed takes it as a handiwork of Ali b. Mus'hir alone. The absence of any genuine reason for Ali b. Mus'hir to preserve this report as a closely guarded secret for about 40 years since the death of Hisham in 146 AH at Baghdad also makes it doubtful. To add to it, we learn that Ali b. Mus'hir had lost his eyesight as well as his senses during the last 12 years of his life. For detailed discussion on the matter please see pages 155 to 159 of the book of Hakim Nyaz Ahmed mentioned earlier.

It has also been pointed out that the Hadith about the age of Aishah at the time of the consummation of her marriage did not exist in the original text of Muhammad b. Ishaq. As already stated, the report does not exist with the details of Ali b. Mus'hir in Musa b. Uqba, Muhammad b. Saaib Kalbi and Seerat Ibn Hisham. Only Tabri seems to have collected and reported the news of Aisha's mothers' taking her from the swing and consummation of her marriage in the house of Sayyidina Abu Bakr. **He, however, fails to provide any Isnaad for the news.** Imam Ahmad born in 164 AH visited Kufa for the first time in 188 AH³⁶¹ during the life of Ali b. Mushir. **He comments about this report as لا شئى³⁶² At another place he declared it as unreliable.³⁶³**

5. Ibn Shahab al-Zuhri

Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn Ubaydullah ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (50-124 AH) is usually referred to simply as Ibn Shihab or al-Zuhri in hadith literature. He had been a central figure among the early collectors of sīra—biographies of the Islamic prophet Muhammad ﷺ and hadith literature. For completion of his studies, Zuhri had spent 30 years of his earliest life at Medina. According to report of Ibn Saad, Zuhri left Medina to learn law at Damascus during the caliphate of Abd al-Malik b. Marwan (r. 65-86 AH). Subsequently, he continued to serve as a courtier at Damascus for about 45 years and died there in 124 AH. There is no evidence that he ever again returned to Medina. Zuhri had great qualities of learning and sharp as well as accurate memory. Some people take him as the first systematic collector of Ahadith. On instructions from Hisham b. Abd al-Malik he had prepared a collection consisting 400 Ahadith. Many of the traditionists take him as a time server who lacked devotion to the Almighty. They, therefore, take Zuhri as unreliable due to his Tadlees, Tadreej and transmitting Mursal Ahadith. Some of the

³⁶¹ See p. 266, 191 *Tahqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

³⁶² See p. 191 *Tahqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

³⁶³ See p. 151 *Tahqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

scholars count him among the hypocrites. For detailed account of criticism against him, please refer to pages 658-667 of *Tahqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed. Zuhri narrated from Sahl ibn Sa'd (r.a), Anas ibn Mālik (r.a), Sā'ib ibn Yazīd, Abdullāh ibn Tha'labah ibn Su'ayr, Maḥmūd ibn Rabī', Maḥmūd ibn Labīd, Shabīb Abū Jamīlah, Sa'īd ibn Musayyab and many others. He also narrated many Ahadith from Urwa son of Zubayr but the scholars of Hadith strongly reject his claim on the ground that he never had seen or heard Urwa b. Zubayr during his life. Wikipedia records about him that:

Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri is regarded as one of the greatest Sunni authorities on Hadith. The leading critics of Hadith such as Ibn al-Madini, Ibn Hibban, Abu Hatim, Al-Dhahabi and Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani are all agreed upon his indisputable authority. He received Ahadith from many Sahaba (Companions) and numerous scholars among the first and second generations after the Companions narrated from him.

In his famous letter to Malik ibn Anas, Laith ibn Saad writes:

Ibn Shihab would give many contradicting statements, when we would meet him. While if any one of us would ask him something in writing, he, in spite of being so learned, would give three contradictory answers to the same question. He would not even be aware of what he had said about the issue in the past. This is what prompted me to give up what you do not approve of [i.e. quoting a narrative on the authority of Ibn Shihab].³⁶⁴

We, therefore, conclude that Ibn Shihab had been an incredible person especially in respect of Ahadith that reduce the nobility and godliness of Sahaba including Sayyida Aysha and Sayyidina Umar. **The book of Rijal-e-Bu Ali counts Ibn-e-Shahab among the Shites.** This

³⁶⁴ Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya, *a`laam al- Muwaqqi'in*, vol. 3, [Beirut: Darul-Jayl], p. 85 cited by Wikipedia, s.v. 'Ibn Shahab al-Zuhri'.

was perhaps the reason that *Usool-e-Kafi* contains a large number of Ahadith reported by Ibn-e-Shahab Zuhri.³⁶⁵

6. Abd-ur-Razzaq:

Abd-ur-Razzaq bin Hammam Sinaani was born in 126 AH at Sina'a, Yemen and died there in 211 AH. He had been a pupil of Abu 'Urwah Ma'mar bin Rashid al-Azdi who was born at Basra in 95/96 AH but spent several years of his later life at Sanaa till his death in 153 AH. Maamar narrated hadith reports from authorities like Qatadah, al-Zuhri (50-124 AH), 'Amr bin Dinar, Hammam bin Munabbih, Al-A'mash, Yahya bin Abi Kathir, Zaid bin Aslam, and Ayub al-Sakhtiyani. Scholars like Sa'id bin 'Arubah, Sufyan al-Thawri, Sufyan bin 'Uyaynah, 'Abdullah bin Mubarak, Al-Waqidi, and 'Abdul Razzaq narrated from him. Mamar had left behind a valuable collection of traditions named ***Al-Jami Mamar*** which remained with Abdurrazzak after the death of Mamar.

Abdurrazzak had three different periods of his life. During the first part, he had been a staunch Sunni Muslim. Subsequently, being impressed by the monastic life of Jaafar b. Sulayman, **he became a Ghali Shia** and started making certain additions in *Jami Mamar* to convert others to his new faith. In his book *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha Siddiqi*, Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed devoted pages 401-422 to point out different fabrications and distortions made by him. He also traveled to Makkah and certain other important centers in the Islamic world to gain knowledge or to preach his faith. Abdurrazzak also suffered from loss of memory and blindness towards last periods of his life.

In spite of the fact that Abdurrazzak authored a voluminous and scholarly book like *Al-Musannaf* and a Tafsir book yet scholars generally did not hold good opinion about him e.g. Ibn Mueen said about him:

فوالله الذي لا اله الا هو كان عبد الرزاق اعلى في ذلك من عبيد الله بن موسى مائة

³⁶⁵ Prof. Qazi Muhammad Tahir Ali Hashmi, *Umar-e-Aysha par Tahqeeqi Nazar* (Urdu), (Lahore: J. M. Art Press, Urdu Bazar, 2011), p. 287-290.

So by Allah besides whome there is no god, Abdurrazzaq excelled in rejection (رفض) hundred times over Ubaid ullah b. Musa from whom I had heard much more than from Ubaidullah.

Although Imam Ahmed had been taking certain Ahadith from Abdurrazzaq during his earlier periods yet later on he also discarded him after discovering certain doubtful things in his narratives. **Imam Nasai says that all Ahadith narrated by Abdu-Razzaq in the old age are Manakeer** i.e. Alien or Unknown. Abbas bin Azeem said on oath that **Abdurrazzaq was a great liar**. Zaid bin Mubarak Sinaani cautioned the people to be careful to narrate any Hadith from Abdurrazzaq. He declared him as a great liar and a thief of Ahadith. For further details please consult *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aishah* by Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, p. 113-117).288

Ch. 12 –

EVALUATION OF THE AHADITH

Some vested interests of certain scholars led them to attribute false and baseless Ahadith to the Holy Prophet ﷺ or some of his companions. Abdullah b. Saba had perhaps been the first person to initiate such a mal-practice which continued even up to 350 AH. In spite of the fact that the Muhaddithin had been taking utmost care to determine the fake from the genuine one, there had always been a possibility of unchallenged circulation of certain fake Ahadith. On the one hand there had been the instructions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that:

اصحابی کالنجوم بایهم اقتدیتم اهتدیتم

My companions are like stars. If you follow any of them you will be quided rightly.

³⁶⁶ *Tahqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed, p. 412.

On the other hand, the fake ones had intermingled with the true in such manner that it was extremely difficult for the scholars to separate one from the other. As regards *Khabar-e-Wahid* (report from a single source) or *Shaz* (rare) Ahadith, the first two rightly guided caliphs had been extremely careful to verify the Ahadith pertaining to the Islamic jurisprudence. As such, they did not accept any Hadith relating Islamic jurisprudence without reassuring themselves about the validity of the Hadith. In such matters, therefore, they insisted that even a Sahabi reporting a Hadith from the Holy Prophet ﷺ may bring a witness to attest his narrative.

The Pattern of Sayyidina Abu Bakr and Umar

Hafiz Zahabi had quoted Ibn Shahab through Kabeesa ibn Zuayb that one grand-mother had come to Sayyidina Abu Bakr to seek her share from the inheritance of her grandson. On asking about the basis for her claim, she produced Mugheera b. Shuba (RA) who said that he had heard from the Holy Prophet ﷺ about the grand mothers' entitlement to one sixth of the inheritance. In spite of the fact that Mugheera as a Sahabi had been extremely credible yet Sayyidina Abu Bakr insisted on another witness. Consequently, Muhammad b. Maslama came forward to attest the narrative of Mugheera b. Shuba. Sayyidina Abu Bakr, therefore, implemented the law accordingly. Similarly, Sayyidina Umar b. Khattab had insisted on 2nd witness to attest the narrative of Abu Musa Ashari who had to produce another Sahabi for the same. The writer has recorded three other instances from Sayyidina Umar where he insisted on Mugheera b. Suba, Abu Musa Ashari and Ubai b. Kaab to produce 2nd witness to prove the Hadith. For details please see *Tareekh-e-Fiqh-e-Islami* by Allama Sheikh Muhammad Kudri Bakk (Urdu tr. by Maulana Habib Ahmed Hashmi, Karachi: Dar-ul-Ishaat, opposite Moulvi Musafir Khana, 1979), p. 172-173. This shows that even the Khulufa-e-Rashidoon like Sayyidina Abu Bakr and Umar did not believe blindly on each and every Hadith even from Sahaba unless it was confirmed by another Sahabi. Keeping in view the strict standard for

acceptance of the Ahadith pertaining to law, observed by the first two caliphs of Islam, the belated narrative of Hadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa from Sayyida Aisha in about 145 AH at Kufah Basra and Baghdad has little credentials for its acceptance.

Pattern of Sayyidina Ali

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ had been adopting strict procedure to verify the credibility of each and every Hadith received by them. To sever the forged Ahadith from the genuine ones, Hadhrat Ali (RA) had said that:

حدثوا الناس بما يعرفون و دعوا ما ينكرون

Narrate only those Ahadith which are familiar to the common people and drop those that are alien to them.³⁶⁷

Similarly, Ibn Abbas is reported having said:

فلا نأخذ إلا ما نعرف

We never accept the odd/ unfamiliar narratives.³⁶⁸

Similarly, Alqama, one of the distinguished pupils of Abdullah bin Masood said:

ان من الحديث حديثا له ضوء كضوء النهار تعرفه و ان من الحديث حديثا له ظلمة كظلمة الليل تنكره

Among the Ahadith, there are certain Ahadith shining like the daylight while there are a few which have the darkness of the night being unfamiliar to you.³⁶⁹

Ibn Jawzi said:

كل حديث رايته يخالف العقل او يناقض الاصول فاعلم انه موضوع

Any Hadith about which you think is against the reason or it

³⁶⁷ Mawlana Munazir Hasan Gilani, *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu (Karachi: Idara Majlis-e-Ilmi, 1956), p. 472. (Tranlated into English by us).

³⁶⁸ *ibid*, p. 478.

³⁶⁹ *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu, p. 465.

conflicts with the fundamentals may be understood as forged or fabricated one.³⁷⁰

The earliest reference to the age of Ayshah is ascribed to Hisham bin Urwa who reportedly narrated it to his disciples at Kufa during his third and last visit to Iraq in 145-146 AH. Imam Zuhri used to say that a Hadith i.e. just the size of a span with us expands to a yard in Iraq. This was the reason that Imam Malik used to call **Iraq as a mint of the Ahadith**. In this respect we must keep in mind the observation of Imam Malik that:

إذا خرج الحديث من الحجاز، انقطع نخاعه

When the Hadith departs from Hijaz, it becomes bereft of its spirit or substance. (Tr. by Haroon Rasheed)

Imam Shafii also endorsed the opinion of Imam Malik in the following words:

إذا لم يوجد الحديث من الحجاز اصل وثب نخاعه-

When the Hadith cannot be traced in Hijaz it's originality becomes lost.

Imam Malik always preferred, the scholars and Muhaddithin from Hijaz. He usually followed the pattern of the believers at Medina. Occasionally he had been setting aside the Ahadith which had not been acted upon earlier to him. Since, the Hadith under discussion had not been circulating in Hijaz and it has also not been acted upon by the earliest generations of the Muslims including the companions of the Prophet ﷺ, therefore, such Ahadith were not acceptable to him. The Hadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa had originated at Kufah about 144 years after the event when there had been no sources to verify the same, therefore, the same cannot be taken as credible.

On page 261 of his book, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed has given a detailed chart about twelve pupils of Hisham bin Urwa among which eight

³⁷⁰ *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu, p. 462.

including Sufyan Souri and Sufyan bin Uyayna had been from Kufa while other four had been from Basra. Isn't it strange that no one from pupils of Hisham except Ali bin Mushir Kufi is the only reporter from Hisham. Even he might have heard about this Hadith in 145 AH he did not disclose it to any one before 185 AH. By that time, Ali bin Mushir had already become blind and had lost substantial part of his memory.

Confliction with other Reports

The Sahih Bukhari reports

حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاذُ بْنُ فَصَالَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامٌ، عَنْ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَبِي سَلَمَةَ، أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ، حَدَّثَهُمْ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " لَا تُنْكَحُ الْيَتِيمَ حَتَّى تُسْتَأْمَرَ وَلَا تُنْكَحُ الْبُكَرُ حَتَّى تُسْتَأْذَنَ ". قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَكَيْفَ إِذْنُهَا قَالَ " أَنْ تَسْكُتَ -

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission." The people asked, "O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! How can we know her permission?" He said, "Her silence (indicates her permission)."³⁷¹

The compiler of famous Hadith Collection Mishkat al Masabeeh Imam Waliuddin abu Abdullah al Khadteeb who died in 741 AH reported about Asma that:

She was the sister of Aysa Siddiqah, wife of Holy Prophet and was ten years older than her. Asma died in 73 AH at the age of 100 years.³⁷²

Similarly Ibn Katheer (701-774 AH) while providing details about the persons killed or died at Makkah in 73 AH, reported the death of Asma bint Abi Bakr at the age of 100 years which affirms the afore-stated report of Imam

³⁷¹ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Book 62, Hadith 67.

³⁷² Taken from *Mishkat al-Masabih*, Edition with Urdu translation published by Maktaba Rahmania, Urdu Bazar, Lahore, 1986, vol. 3, p. 303.

Waliuddin Abu Abdullah Al-Khateeb.³⁷³ Now if Asma died in 73 AH at the age of 100 years she might have been at least 27-28 years at the time of Hijra. Aisha being 10 years younger to her must have been of about 19 years at the time of the the consummation of her marriage in Shawwal 2 AH.

The marriage of Aysha might have been consumed at her mature age is also evident from a Hadeeth contained in *Sahih Bukhari*:

Narrated Aysha: (wife of the Prophet) since I reached the age when I could remember things, I have seen my parents worshipping according to the right faith of Islam. Not a single day passed but Allah's Apostle visited us both in the morning and in the evening.³⁷⁴

The interpretation of this Hadith may, therefore, be made keeping in view other traditions reporting that **Aysha had been born some four to six years before the Holy Prophet ﷺ received his call from the Almighty.** Others also believe that when Abu Bakr set out for Ethiopia as an emigrant, Aysha must have been 5 or 6 years old. Since the first Migration towards Habsha had occurred during 7 to 9 years before Migration to Medina, therefore, the age of Aysha at that time can be assessed between 13 to 15 years. By this account her Nikah with the Holy Prophet ﷺ could not have been solemnized before she had attained 16 years of her age and she might have been 19 years old at the time of the consummation of her marriage.

Some of the reporters maintain that Sayyida Aishah had born about a year earlier than the start of the missionary time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If so, there could be no possibility of her being one of the سابقون الاولون (the earliest converters to Islam). Alternately, she must have been at least 7 to 8 years old to be counted among them. According to this, her age at the time of her Hijrah to Medina should have been 20-21 years. That there had been no

³⁷³ Tareekh-e-Ibn Katheer, Urdu tr. of *Albidaya WaNihaya* (, Vol. 8 (Karachi: Nafees Academy Urdu Bazar, 1989) p. 1366-1369.

³⁷⁴ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 3, Book 37, Hadith Number 494.

overwhelming majority of the girls to be married at a tender age is also evident from the fact that after the death of Sayyida Ruqyya in 2 AH, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had married Sayyida Umm-e-Kalthum to Sayyidina Uthman in the 3rd of Hijrah at the age of 22 years. Her age at the time of marriage, therefore, shows that it was not unusual to marry women at 20-25 years.

Scholars like Mahmood Ahmed Zafar believed that some reporter mistakenly omitted to write word عشره after سنة. As such, the age of Aysha at the time of her Nikaah was reported as six years instead of sixteen years. He reiterates the argument that Asma bint Abu Bakr, the elder sister of Aysha was 10 years older than Syidah Aysha. According to report of *Ibn-e-Kathir* the age of Sayyida Asma at the time of Hijrah can be worked out as 27 years. As such, Sayyida Aysha being 10 years younger to Sayyida Asma must have been $27 - 10 = 17$ years at the time of Hijrah. For details and references please see '*Ummahat-al-Mumineen*' by Mahmood Ahmad Zafar (Lahore: Takhleeqat, Ali Plaza, 3 Muzang Rd. 2000).

It is observed that the polytheists, non-believers and Munafiqoon had always been trying to scandalize the Holy Prophet ﷺ on one account or the other. A group of Munafiqeen or hypocrites headed by Abdullah bin Ubai bin Salool even tried to fabricate a calumny on the holy mother of the believers i.e. Sayyida Aishah and gave wide publicity to it. Ultimately, to rescue her the Almighty himself had to reveal and affirm the purity of her character (Al-Qur'an 24:11-17). In addition to the same this Surah has proclaimed the final verdict of the Lord about the eligibility of women and men as regards their characters in the following:

Women impure are for men impure, and men impure for women impure and women of purity are for men of purity, and men of purity are for women of purity: these are not affected by what people say: for them there is forgiveness, and a provision honourable.³⁷⁵

All the believers in the world confess omniscience of the Almighty. Had, therefore, been any truth in the allegation against Ayshah, the Almighty would have immediately

³⁷⁵ Al-Qur'an 24:26 Yousuf Ali.

directed the Holy Prophet ﷺ to sever his relations with her. The Lord confirms about the excellence of the moral behavior of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by saying that:

And thou (standest) on an exalted standard of character.³⁷⁶

As such, indictment of paedophilia as emanating from the consummation of the marriage with a child of about nine years contradicts the verdict of the Almighty. It, therefore, deserves outright rejection from the believers. The Lord definitely had the perfect knowledge about the past, present and future works or actions of His creatures. Had the Prophet ﷺ committed anything below the most exalted standard of morality, the Lord would not have forgotten to reprimand him for the same. No cognisance from the Lord is, therefore, tantamount to rejection of the reports alleging consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah during her childhood.

No doubt that both Imam Muhammad bin Ismael al-Bukhari and Muslim bin Hajjaj had traveled throughout the centers of Islamic learning in the world and their efforts to scan or scrutinize the traditions available to them had been commendable yet none of these compilers could boast of infallibility in the same. These collections, therefore, cannot be treated at par with the Holy Qur'an about which the Almighty himself had taken the responsibility to preserve it from any corruption at any time in the world. As such the collections of Bukhari, Muslim and Nisai though being treated as among the most authentic books after the Qur'an cannot be treated as immune from occasional or perhaps rare mistakes in the same.

Narrative of Hisham

It is said that that the first narrative about the age of Sayyida Aishah originates from Hisham b. Urwa who

³⁷⁶ Al-Qur'an 68:4 Yousuf Ali.

disclosed it to 8 of his disciples i.e. Sufyan Souri, Sufyan b. Uyayna, Abu Muawiah, Abu Usama, Abda b. Sulayman, Ali b. Mus'hir, Yunus b. Bukair and Wakee in about 145 AH i.e. a year before his death. Besides them, he also narrated it to four of his disciples at Basrah i.e. Hammad b. Salma, Hammad b. Zayd, Wuhaib b. Kahlid and Jaafar b. Sulayman.³⁷⁷ Strange enough that out of the twelve disciples of Hisham, only Ali b. Mus'hir dared to publicize it at Kufah in about 185-189 after keeping it as a secret for about 39 years from the death of Hisham. Marriage or consummation of marriage being a widely proclaimed event must have been known to majority of believers at Medina. We could, therefore, find large number of reporters other than Sayyida Aishah as witnesses of the event. How be it that we find no other witness or ratifier of the report attributed to Sayyida Aishah. We also find no reasons for Sayyida Aishah to conceal this news from all the companions of the Prophet ﷺ calling upon her, the Muhaddithin and her disciples. Eventually, she seems to have confided this news only to Urwa b. Zubair who again does not report it to anyone except Hisham. Hisham again keeps it a secret during his entire stay at Medina and narrates it only to his disciples at Kufah a year or so before his death. Hisham by that time had not only lost his memory and senses but also was suffering from blindness for the last two years.

Similarly, in spite of living up to 94 AH, Urwa b. Zubair did not disclose this news to anyone except his 10th offspring i.e. Hisham b. Urwa. Hisham (61-146 AH) had continued to live for 73 years of his earlier life at Medina but he too did not narrate the Hadith about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah to anyone there. It was during the third and last visit of Hisham that he narrated this Hadith from Sayyida Aishah to his disciples at Kufah in 145 AH. Most famous among them had been Ali b. Mus'hir who publicized it at Kufah during 185-189 AH. By that time Ali b. Mus'hir himself was suffering not only from blindness for last 10-11 years but also from loss of senses and memory. Ali b. Mus'hir died in 189 AH and he chose to confide this news with others only towards the end of his days after concealing it for about 40 years. The reasons for unusual concealment of the news by Ali b. Mus'hir, Hisham bin

³⁷⁷ Hakeem Niaz Ahmed, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aysha Siddiqah*, p. 263.

Urwa, Urwa b. Zubayr and Sayyida Aishah, had no where been explained by the historians or the Muhaddithin. It was, therefore, about 40 years after the death of Hisham b. Urwa, about 92 years after the death of Urwa b. Zubayr and about 127 years after the death of Sayyida Aishah that the news was publicised at Kufah during 185-189 AH. Reportedly, the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah had taken place in Shawwal 1 AH. We, therefore, learn of the event after about 184 years of its occurrence. Such belated news, therefore, loses its credibility with the scholars.

We find no genuine reasons for the concealment of the news by the persons mentioned in the chain of narrators. As regards Ali b. Mus'hir, however, it might have been due to apprehension of the rebuttle from great jurists and eminent scholars like Imam Abu Hanifa (d. 150 -AH), Imam Awzai (d. 170/171), Imam Malik (d. 179), Imam Abu Yousuf (d. 181) and Abdullah b. Mubarak (d. 181) and Imam Musa Kazim (d. 183). Although, Imam Muhammad b. Hasan al-Shaybani had been living till 189 AH yet Ali b. Mus'hir could ignore him due to his posting as a Qadhi at far off places like Raqqa and then Rey in Khorasan. Even the last Tabiee i.e. Khalaf ibn Khalifa had died in 180 AH. It was, therefore, after the death of the nobilities mentioned above that Ali b. Mus'hir felt himself secure to publicise this news at Kufah during 185-189 AH.

It's a well known fact that the forgerers of Ahadith prefer to attribute their fabrications to the chain of narrators enjoying greatest credibility among the masses. In the present case Sayyida Aishah, Urwa b. Zubair and Hisham b. Urwa had been the names that could hardly be rejected by the traditionists. They, therefore, included it in their collections along with the the Isnad thereof for further scrutiny by the scholars succeeding them. In spite of all this, the Ahadith suggesting tender age of Sayyida Aishah failed to gain popular acceptance from the masses simply because they were considered *Dhaeef* and Khabar-e-Wahid. None of the Sahaba, Tabieen or Taba Tabieen had either endorsed the news or acted upon the Sunnah described in these Ahadith. Believers at Makkah, Medina, Hijaz, Sham, Egypt, Yemen or other parts of the Islamic world neither

had any knowledge of this Hadith nor did they adopt it as a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

We believe that the Holy Prophet ﷺ could not have diverged from the traditions of the earlier prophets without some specific commandment of the Lord. Since we find no commandment in the Qur'an or the Ahadith to allow child marriage to the believers, therefore, there is no room to reme that the Prophet ﷺ might have consumed the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 lunar years without any guidance from the Lord. We also note that the completion of the religion had been certified by the Almighty in the following:

(...) This Day have I perfected your Religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam As your religion (...). (Al-Qur'an 5:3)

This means that by the time of Hajja-tul-Wada, each and every precept of Islam had been revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his followers.

That, the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been certified as the best as compared to all other communities in the world. God said:

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah.³⁷⁸

The Holy Prophet ﷺ, too, had attested the collective rectitude of his companions and two generations succeeding them in the following:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَثِيرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ مَنْصُورٍ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ عُبَيْدَةَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " خَيْرُ النَّاسِ قَرْنِي، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ، ثُمَّ الَّذِينَ يَلُونَهُمْ، ثُمَّ يَجِيءُ قَوْمٌ تَسْبِقُ شَهَادَةُ أَحَدِهِمْ بَيِّمَتُهُ وَبَيِّمَتُهُ شَهَادَتُهُ ". قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ وَكَانُوا يَضْرِبُونَ عَلَى الشَّهَادَةِ وَالْعَهْدِ وَنَحْنُ صَغَارٌ.

Narrated `Abdullah: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The best people are those living in my generation, and then those who will follow them, and then those who will follow the latter. Then

³⁷⁸ Al-Qur'an 3:110 Yousuf Ali.

there will come some people who will bear witness before taking oaths, and take oaths before bearing witness." (Ibrahim, a sub-narrator said, "They used to beat us for witnesses and covenants when we were still children.")³⁷⁹

Keeping in view this, no lapse, negligence or diversion can be attributed to Sahaba and their successors. We cannot, therefore, think of any collective error or omission on the part of Sahaba. In such a case the total non-existence/non-adoption of the so called Sunnah about consummation of marriage with a prepubescent bride by the earliest Muslim community can be taken as a proof of fakery or fabrication of the tradition attributed to Hisham b. Urwa during 145-189 AH.

Let us also keep in mind another Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as quoted below:

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ : (إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَجْمَعُ أُمَّتِي عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ ، وَيَدُ اللَّهِ مَعَ الْجَمَاعَةِ)

Ibn Umar (RA) reported that the Apostle of Allah has said: Verily Allah will never let my Ummah come together on a wrong verdict (unanimously), and that the (helping and guarding) hand of Allah is with a group (of people).³⁸⁰

Islam definitely had certain principles to determine permissibility or prohibition of certain acts deeds and engagements. One of the principles was to choose something that could be much more beneficial than being disadvantageous or hurtful e.g.

They ask thee concerning wine and gambling. Say: "In them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit."³⁸¹

O ye who believe! Intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination,- of Satan's handwork: eschew such (abomination), that ye may

³⁷⁹ *Sahih Bukhari*, Vol. 5, Book 57, Hadith Number 3.

³⁸⁰ *Sahih Tirmidhi*, Hadith No. 2167.

³⁸¹ Al-Qur'an 2:219 Yousuf Ali.

prosper.³⁸²

عن أبي سعيدٍ سعد بن سنانٍ الحذري رضي الله عنه: أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: ((لا ضرر ولا ضرار))

There should be neither harming [darar] nor reciprocating harm [diraar].

Since the permission for consummation of marriage with prepubescent brides was likely to cause physical as well as mental harm to them, therefore, Islam could not be expected to allow the same.

We find no trace of the practice to consume the marriage with tender-aged girls among the Sahaba and their successors. There being no possibility of the consensus of Ummah on a wrong verdict, we cannot ascribe any omission or violation to them. Their refraining from having sex with pre-pubescent brides can, therefore, taken as the right course to be adopted by the Ummah.

As such, the tradition referring to the tender age of Sayyida Aishah attributed to Hisham, Urwa and Sayyida Aishah herself must be rejected as a fabrication of later periods on the grounds that it conflicts with the afore-stated verdict of the Almighty, certification of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and non-existence of the practice of consuming marriage with pre-buloogh brides among the entire community of the earliest followers of Islam. We, therefore, conclude that the narrative of consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 years was a later fabrication aiming to prove her as a teenaged girl playing with dolls lacking sufficient knowledge of Qur'an and astuteness for sound judgment in matters relating to public affairs. They, therefore, try to degrade her knowing full well that she had been the most beloved wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his life on Earth and she had also been given the glad tiding to be his wife in the Jannah. The Sahaba had been acknowledging her as one of the greatest scholars and a par-excellence jurist of Islam. As such, any attempt to prove Sayyida Aishah as a child bride may be taken as an attempt to accuse the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a paedophile than a role model depicting the most exalted moral

³⁸² Al-Qur'an 5:90 Yousuf Ali.

character in the world.³⁸³ Hence instead of our eagerness to prove each and every entry in the *Sihah Khamsa* (referred to as scriptures by the critics) true, we need to attach prime importance to the moral excellence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and transcendent precepts of Islam. No believer can, therefore, entertain a report that conflicts with the magnificent commandments of the Almighty or the overall spirit of Islam.

A Persian Proverb has it that خودکرده را علاجی نیست (There is no remedy for one's own wrong doing). The discussion about the age at the time of the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah befittingly falls under the said category. We firmly hold that the Nikah and consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah had taken place exactly in accordance with the prevailing norms of the Arabian community at Makkah and Medina. No one observed any oddity in it up to the end of the 2nd century AH. It was for the first time that during 145-189 AH, Ali b. Mus'hir a disciple of Hisham son of Urwa at Kufah publicised the news suggesting consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at the age of 9 lunar years. The news, thereafter, continued to be transmitted to different centres of Islamic world. Many of the traditionists including the compilers of *Sihah Khamsa* picked up the news and included it in their collections during 232-302 AH. In spite of this, the jurists of Islam and overwhelming majority of the believers did not take it as an established truth. Marriage before buloogh had never, therefore, been declared lawful in Islam.

No one among them except Urwa b. Zubayr transmits this Hadith from Sayyida Aishah. Urwa died at Medina in 94 AH. Among his contemporaries had been great tabieen and jurists of Islam like Saeed b. Musayyib Makhzoomi (d. 94 AH), Abu Bakr bin Abdurrahman b. Haris (d. 94 AH), Ali b. Husayn b. Abu Talib (d. 94 AH), Ubaidullah b. Abdullah b. Utbah b. Masood (d. 98 AH), Salim b. Abdullah b. Umar (d. 106 AH), Sulaiman b. Yasaar (d. 107 AH), Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abi Bakr³⁸⁴ (36-106 AH) and Nafe Maola

³⁸³ Al-Qur'an 68:4.

³⁸⁴ Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abu Bakar taught and raised by Sayyida Aishah herself. In his discipleship of Sayyida Aishah, he even excelled Urwa b. Zubair.

Abdullah b. Umar (d. 117 AH). No one among the afore-stated scholars reported having heard this Hadith either from Sayyida Aisha or from Urwa b. Zubayr. Similarly, from the prominent Taba Tabieen of Medina had been Muhammad b. Muslim i.e. Ibn Shahab Zuhri (d. 124 AH), Abu Jaafar b. Muhammad b. Ali b. Husayn (Imam Baqir, d. 114 AH), Abu Zannad Abdullah b. Zakwan (d. 131 AH), Yahya b. Saeed Ansari (d. 143 AH) and Rabea b. Abdurrahman (d. 136 AH). Among them, Zuhri had been the only narrator to report this Hadith from Urwa b. Zubair. Scholars, however, are unanimous on the observation that **Zuhri had neither seen nor heard anything from Urwa b. Zubayr during his life.**

As regards Makkah, there had been great Tabieen like Mujahid b. Jubayr (d. 103 AH), Ikrama Maula Ibn Abbas (d. 107 AH), Ata b. Abi Rabah, (d. 114 AH) and Abu Zubayr Muhammad b. Muslim b. Tadras (d. 127 AH) who reported nothing about the age of Sayyida Aisha. Similarly, there had been great Tabieen from Yemen like Taus b. Kisan Jindi (d. 106 AH), and Yahya b. Abi Kathir Maula Tai (d. 139 AH) who knew nothing about this Hadith. Although Abdurrazzak the Ghali Shia disciple of Wahab b. Munabbah Sinaani (d. 114 AH) attributed this Hadith to Wahab b. Munabbah from Zuhri from Urwa yet the scholars do not accept it as a narrative of Wahab b. Munabbah. They also point out that Zuhri had never seen nor heard Urwa b. Zubayr during his life.

Keeping in view the background, the history and critical evaluation of the Ahadith, some Muhaddithin had opined that the Hadith about the age of Sayyida Aishah had neither originated from Sayyida Aishah nor from Urwa b. Zubair. There is no evidence that any other Sahabi or Tabiee had heard this Hadith directly from Sayyida Aishah or from Urwa b. Zubair (21-94 AH) during their lives. Had the news been true, it might also have been reported by Sayyidina Abu Bakr, Umm-e-Roman, Sayyida Asmaa, Abdullah b. Zubair, and some others from their relatives. Hence, the non-existence of the news among the Sahaba, the Tabieen and other believers at Medina, Makkah and Hijaz up to the end of 2nd century AH suggests invention of Hadith in the periods much later than the earliest generations of Islam.

THE TENDER-AGED GIRL جارية حديثه السن

It is worth noting here that with the exception of Sayyida Aishah herself none of the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ reported anything about her tender age at the time of the consummation of her marriage. Among the Tabieen, only Urwa b. Zubair (21-94 AH), his son Hisham b. Urwa and Aswad b. Yazid (d. 75 AH) of Kufah are the reporters from no one else than Sayyida Aishah. Since the event of Nikaah or consummation of marriage fell under the verdict of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that **“a marriage should be widely proclaimed”**³⁸⁵, there could be hardly any believer at Medina in 1 or 2 Hijrah or thereafter who could have been unaware of the event. No report from any of them, therefore, stand as a proof of fabrication of the tradition long after the death of Sayyida Aishah, companions of the Prophet ﷺ and publication of the news more than a decade after the death of Jarir b. Hazim in about 170 AH. According to many scholars, he was the last of the Tabieen. Other scholars maintain that Khalaf b. Khaleefa³⁸⁶ (d. 181 AH) was the last one of the Tabieen but some of the scholars dispute his status as a Tabiee.

In any case the age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of her marriage had never been a debatable issue among the earliest five generations of Muslims before its disclosure by Hisham b. Urwa at Kufah in about 145 AH. Hisham, however, did not provide any reasons for concealment of this news for about 144 years after the event. Reportedly, Ali b. Mus'hir one of the disciples of Hisham had heard about the tradition in about 145 AH but he publicised it only during 185-189 at Kufah. Scholars, however, observe that

³⁸⁵ *Musnad* Imam Ahmad, Vol IV.

³⁸⁶ Many scholars mention Khalaf b. Khalifa died in 181 AH as the last one of the Tabieen who had seen the last Sahabi i.e. Abu Tufayl Amr b. Wathila at Makkah (Uloom al-Hadith (Urdu) tr. by Ghulam Ahmed Hareeri, (Lyallpur: Malak Brothers, Karkhana Bazar,), p. 453-454). According to other scholars, the last one to die among the Tabieen was Jarir bin Haazim (died 170 A.H.) Siddiqi, Muhammad (1993). *Hadith Literature* (PDF). Oxford: The Islamic Texts Society. p. 29.

Hisham was suffering from blindness as well as mental disorder at the time he narrated the tradition. Similarly, after keeping it as a closely guarded secret for about 40 years after the death of Hisham, Ali b. Mus'hir publicised it through his disciples at a time when he himself had been suffering from blindness as well as his senses during the last 12 years of his life. For detailed discussion on the matter please see pages 155 to 159 of the book of Hakim Nyaz Ahmed mentioned earlier.

Since, many of the other disciples of Hisham at Kufah, Basra and Baghdad report about hearing the news from Hisham, therefore, it seems to have become well known especially at Kufah and generally in Iraq by the time of Imam Bukhari's visit (sometime after 210 AH) there. Imam Bukhari might also have heard this Hadith from an unnamed disciple of Abdurrazzaq (126-211 AH) who in spite of being a great scholar had converted himself to a Ghali Shia. Besides this, he also had other incredibilities as described in his life history in chapter s.v. '*Prominent Figures in Chain of Narrators*'.

Imam Bukhari had paid several visits to Basra as well as Baghdad. He, therefore, might also have called on Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal. Isn't it strange to observe that Imam Bukhari did not take any advantage from the long Hadith Number 26288 in the Musnad of Imam Ahmed (164-241 AH). May be the Hadith had not been made part of Imam Ahmad's collection up to 241 AH. Since, the Hadith had no impact on the jurisprudence prepared by Imam Ahmed, the same could be due to his non-reliance on the report. In any case, it is certain that except for Iraq the news about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah did not exist anywhere in the Islamic world till the end of the 2nd century AH.

The disquieting narratives of Ahadith about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah in the Sihah Khamsa (compiled during 232-302 AH) had been ascribed to Hisham b. Urwa or his father Urwa b. Zubair. Sihah Khamsa ascribed to Imam Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Ibn-e-Maja, Nasai and Abu Dawud had thereafter been the common and primary source for the Ahadith referring to the tender age of Sayyida Aishah. In addition to Hisham and Urwa, however, there are certain narratives from other sources e.g. in Sahih Muslim, we also find a report also from Imam Zuhri and Aswad. *Sunan-e-Ibn-e-Majah* contains another narrative from Abu Ubaida. Similarly, Nasai has a report from Aswad and Abu Salama.

It, however, seems that Nasai might have taken this report from Musnad Imam Ahmed. The interested readers can find detailed evaluation and criticism of each and every *Hadith* suggesting the minor age of Sayyida Aishah in the books mentioned below:

1) *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha Siddiqah* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed.

2) *Umar-e-Aisha par Tehqeeqi Nazar* by Prof. Qadhi Tahir Ali Hashmi.

3) *Umar-e-Sayyida Aisha par Aik Tahqeeqi Nazar* (urdu) by Habeeb al-Rahman Kandhlvi. Bazm-e-Urdu Library at lib.bazmeurdu.net).

4) *Meezan-e-Umar-e-Aishah Siddeeqa* by Brig. Hamid Saeed Akhtar (Zia-ul-Qur'an pub. Data Darbar, Lahore, ph. 042-37221953).

We hope the books mentioned above may suffice to satisfy the readers about spuriousness of this extremely belated report from Kufah and Basra in Iraq against its total non-existence at Makkha, Medina, Hijaz and other centres of Islam up to the end of 2nd century AH. Factually, the age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of consummation of her marriage had never been a debatable issue during the life of the Sahaba, the Tabieen, the Taba Tabieen and other members of the Muslim Ummah before the incorporation of such Ahadith in Sihah Khamsa. The origin of the Hadith suggesting 6/9 years age had been ascribed to Hisham b. Urwa from his father Urwa from Sayyida Aishah. Even Ali b. Mus'hir a disciple of Hisham b. Urwa did not publicize this Hadith before 185-189 AH i.e. about 40 years after the death of Hisham, about 91 years after the death of Urwa and 128 years after the death of Sayyida Aishah. In all events, however, **it remains a Khabar-e-Wahid narrated by no one else than Sayyida Aishah.** No Sahabai other than Sayyida Aishah had reported about the consummation of her marriage at the age of 9 years. It was revealed by Hisham at kufah in 145 AH when all the original narrators had expired. The Muslim Ummah, therefore, had neither the primary sources to reaffirm the news nor could they reject the same outrightly.

Hisham b. Urwa (61-146 AH) had spent the first 71-73 years of his life at Medina during which no one among his companions or disciples ever heard the narrative about the

tender age of Sayyida Aishah from him. With the exception of Urwa b. Zubayr, none of disciples of Sayyida Aishah including important figures like Qasim b. Muhammad b. Abu Bakr, Ammara bint Abdurrahman Ansariah reported anything about the age of Sayyida Aishah. Similarly the great Muhaddithin, Fuqahaa and scholars of Medina, Makkah or Hijaz had no knowledge of this narrative ascribed to Sayyida Aishah. So much so, that the news had not reached even Saleh b. Kaisan (40-140 AH) the great Tabiee, scholar and Faqeeh of Medina. The presence of such scholars at Medinah might have, however, been the hindrance for Hisham to break this news there. It was, therefore, after the death of Saleh b. Kaisan and many other important Muhaddithin and the scholars that Hisham could disclose this news for the first time at Kufah in about 145 AH. The non-existence of the news among the Sahaba and the five earliest generations of the believers at Medina, Makkah and Hijaz, therefore, makes the veracity as well as attribution of the Hadith to Sayyida Aishah, at Kufah in 145 AH as extremely incredible.

The critics of Sayyida Aisha had always been eager to find fault with her. Taking her as an opponent of Sayyidina Ali, they inserted various words and phrases in the Ahadith to allege immaturity and shallowness of knowledge to Sayyida Aishah. Many fake Ahadith were, therefore, put into circulation to show her as a child-like playful girl having insufficient knowledge of the Qur'an, Ahadith or jurisprudence from one Nabvi to the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Rabiul Awwal 11 AH. In case we believe them, then Sayyida Aishah must have been suffering from some mental or physical disorder which kept her mental growth freezed for about 20 years i.e. at least from 4 Nabvi to Rabi-ul-Awwal 11 AH. This covers not only 13 years of her *سابقون الاولون* period but also more than 9 years of her day and night companionship with the most luminous figure ³⁸⁷ (سراجا منيرا) who ever lived on the planet Earth. While most of the companions had been blessed with prudent judgment رشد just with a glimpse of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, how could it be that Sayyida Aishah could not get rid of her continuing naïveness, ignorance or immaturity till the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We, therefore, strongly rebut the reports alleging prepubescent

³⁸⁷ Al-Qur'an 33:45-47.

consummation of marriage, shallowness of knowledge or carelessness to Sayyida Aishah who had been acknowledged as a paragon of learning virtue and rectitude among the Ummah.

Outstanding Faculties of Sayyida Aishah

Sayyida Aishah's exceptional intelligence, sharp memory, capability to understand and decide most complicated matters of Fiqh had been unanimously acknowledged by all the scholars of mainstream Islam. She had undoubtedly been a prodigy of learning especially regarding the exposition and interpretation of the Qur'an. As such, those who try to allege childhood or shallowness of the knowledge about Qur'an and Sunnah to her must feel ashamed of their falsehood. The precision to remember, memorise and narrate about 2210 Ahadith makes her one of the four Sahaba known as Mukathireen (the reporters of great number of Ahadith). The Ahadith reported by Sayyidina Aysha covers about 253 pages i.e. from 29-282 in Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. She possessed great powers of reasoning, criticism and deduction to resolve problems on the basis of her outstanding knowledge about the Qur'an and the Ahadith. In this respect, no other woman among the believers including other wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ could claim any equality with her. All this could not have been possible if she had joined the Prophet ﷺ at the tender age of 9 years and was just a teenager till the time of his death. She could be taken as a scholar of Qur'an and interpreter of Islam only if she had Joined the Prophet at mature age and continued to listen and observe his day and night conduct to acquire the knowledge for more than 9 years.

Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi is one of the top-most supporters of the Ahadith about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of the consummation of her marriage. He, therefore, strongly endorses the opinion of the reporters and the historians who insist that marriage of Sayyida Aishah had been consumed at the age of 9 years and she spent next 9 years in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Ultimately she was just a teen ager of 18 years at the time of the

death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We, however, feel that the great scholar had taken all that trouble **only to 'make right' the reports in Sihah Khamsa and some of the books of history writing under the influence of the Kufi or Iraqi proponents of the carelessness and playfulness of Sayyida Aishah till the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.** His writings, therefore, lend indirect support to Hadith-e-Ifk in Sahih Bukhari (Vol. 5, Book 59, Hadith No. 462 in English and Hadith No. 3910 in the Arabic Version). It contains the words attributed to Sayyida Aishah that:

وانا جارية حديثة السن لا اقرا من القرآن كثيرا

I was a young girl and did not have much knowledge of the Qur'an.

We, however, take it as a libel against the greatest scholar of Islam and the most beloved wife as well as companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Her prominence in Fiqh-o-Qyas (Islamic Jurisprudence and deductive analogy) can be studied from the writing of Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi at pg 193 of his books *Seerat-e-Aishah*.³⁸⁸ To prove her excellence of knowledge and judgment about Islamic jurisprudence Sayyid Sulaiman has listed about 31 instances where she differed from the prominent scholars of her time. In all such matters, the Ummah had upheld the correctness of Sayyida Aishah as compared to others. Please see the list at pages 201 to 204 of *Seerat-e-Aishah* by Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi.

Even some of the distinguished companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ like Abu Huraira, Abu Musa Ashari, Zaid b. Khali Juhani and Safiyah bint Shaiba have reported certain Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ from her. Among the great Tabieen to report from her had been Saeed b. Musayyib, Alqama b. Qais, Masrooq b. Ajda, Aishah b. Talha, Amra b. Abdurrahman and Hafsa b. Saireen.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ A good description about the excellence of Aisha in many respects can also be found in the book *Zia-un-Nabi* Vol. VII, pp 495-502. The readers may also consult the same.

³⁸⁹ Dr. Subhi Saleh, *Uloom-ul-Hadith* (Urdu tr. by Ghulam Ahmed Hareeri), (Faisalabad: Malik Brothers Publishers, Karkhana Bazar, 1968), p. 463-464.

In spite of being great supporter of the tender age of Sayyida Aishah, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi, counted 17 of her distinctions especially in the Qur'an, Sunnah and Jurisprudence on pages 157-161 of his book *Seerat-e-Aishah*. Among them had been the two different reports from Imam Zuhri i.e.

كانت عائشة اعلم الناس، يستلها الاكابر من اصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

Aisha had been the most knowledgeable among the People and even the greatest Companions of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to seek her guidance (in different matters of religion).

Imam Zuhri had also said that:

لو جمع علم الناس كلهم و علم ازواج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فكانت عائشة اوسعهم علما

Even if we compare the collective knowledge of all the people including the wives of the Prophet to Sayyida Aishah, her knowledge would be more extensive (than their combined knowledge).

Instead of assuming her merely as an immature and playful girl, therefore, we must accept her excellence to interpret the Qur'an and to understand the correct import of the Ahadith and Sunnah of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. It was due to excellence of her knowledge and maturity to understand the most complicated issues that she influenced the opinions of the greatest companions of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Muhaddithin and scholars of Islam. For details please see *Seerat-e-Aishah* by Sayyid Sulaiman Nadvi page 175-201. We find there that she corrected the nobilities like Abu Huraira, Umar b. Khattab, Anas b. Malik, Abu Talha, Abu Saeed, Ibn-e-Abbas, Abu Abdurrehman, Ali b. Abi Talib and Zaid b. Thabit. Umm al-Mumineen as such, had been acknowledged as the most knowledgable personality of the time. To allege any immaturity, carelessness or shallowness of knowledge to her, therefore, is a perversion of facts. As a crown of the arguments about the excellence of Sayyida Aishah's knowledge of Qur'an, we quote the famous Hadeeth of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the following:

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْوَهَّابِ، حَدَّثَنَا حَمَّادٌ، حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامٌ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ كَانَ النَّاسُ يَتَخَرَّوْنَ يَهْدَايَاهُمْ يَوْمَ عَائِشَةَ قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَلَجْتُمْ صَوَاحِبِي إِلَى أُمِّ سَلَمَةَ، فَقُلْنَا يَا أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ، وَاللَّهِ إِنْ النَّاسَ يَتَخَرَّوْنَ يَهْدَايَاهُمْ يَوْمَ عَائِشَةَ، وَأَنَا نُرِيدُ الْخَيْرَ كَمَا تُرِيدُهُ عَائِشَةُ، فَمُرِّي رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْ يَأْمُرَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يَهْدُوا إِلَيْهِ حَيْثُ مَا كَانَ أَوْ حَيْثُ مَا دَارَ، قَالَتْ فَذَكَرْتُ ذَلِكَ أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَتْ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنِّي، فَلَمَّا عَادَ إِلَيَّ ذَكَرْتُ لَهُ ذَلِكَ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنِّي، فَلَمَّا كَانَ فِي الثَّلَاثَةِ ذَكَرْتُ لَهُ فَقَالَ " يَا أُمُّ سَلَمَةَ لَا تُؤْذِينِي فِي عَائِشَةَ، فَإِنَّهُ وَاللَّهِ مَا نَزَلَ عَلَى الْوَحْيِ وَأَنَا فِي لِحَافِ امْرَأَةٍ مِنْكُمْ غَيْرَهَا .

Narrated Hisham's father: The people used to send presents to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the day of `Aisha's turn. `Aisha said, "My companions (i.e. the other wives of the Prophet) gathered in the house of Um Salama and said, "O Um Salama! By Allah, the people choose to send presents on the day of `Aisha's turn and we too, love the good (i.e. presents etc.) as `Aisha does. You should tell Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) to tell the people to send their presents to him wherever he may be, or wherever his turn may be." Um Salama said that to the Prophet and he turned away from her, and when the Prophet (ﷺ) returned to her (i.e. Um Salama), she repeated the same, and the Prophet (ﷺ) again turned away, and when she told him the same for the third time, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "**O Um Salama! Don't harm me by harming `Aisha, for by Allah, the Divine Inspiration never came to me while I was under the blanket of any woman amongst you except her.**"³⁹⁰

In view of this we find no compatibility of the Hadith put in the mouth of Sayyida Aishah declaring that:

وانا جارية حديثة السن لا اقرا من القرآن كثيرا

I was a young girl and had a little knowledge of the Qur'an.

Prof. Muhammad Tahir Ali Hashmi has reported the same part of the Hadith in the following words: i.e. *وانا جارية حديثة وانا جارية حديثة السن لم اقرا كثيرا من القرآن (and I was a girl of tender age who had not read a large portion of the Qur'an).*³⁹¹

Doesn't it imply that Sayyida Aishah had been whiling away her time just by playing with the dolls etc. but paying no

³⁹⁰ *Sahih al-Bukhari* translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Book 62, Hadith 122.

³⁹¹ *Umar-e-Aisha par Tehqeeqi Nazar*. p. 97.

attention to the most precious privilege, the Lord had conferred on her?

Even prior to the revelation of the Ayah quoted below, the Holy Prophet ﷺ must have been stressing on his wives and companions to remember and to act upon the revelations in the Qur'an. God said:

And bear in mind that which is recited in your houses of the revelations of Allah and wisdom. Lo! Allah is Subtile, Aware.³⁹²

Some people may, therefore, think that Sayyida Aishah might have started acquiring more knowledge of the Qur'an only after the afore-stated revelation but how to resolve their confliction with those who continue to prolong her playfulness and ignorance up to the return of the Prophet from Tabuk. To add to it, they insist on the childish characteristics of Sayyida Aishah even up to the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The term playful girl had always been the enduring theme of the Ahadith stressing tender age of Sayyida Aisha. We find it resounding continuously for about 18 years i.e. from 4th of Nabvi to Ghazwa-e-Tabook in 9th AH. As against this, many of the scholars had reached the conclusion that Sayyida Aishah had reached her Bulooch in the 4th of Nabvi.³⁹³ Some of the critics also alleged that Sayyida Aishah did not get her menses before Hajja-tul-Wada i.e. till the end of 10 AH. The said assumption cannot be entertained simply because we find various Ahadith from Sayyida Aishah describing routine of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during the period of her menstruation. Instead of prescribing any limitations of time, these Ahadith refer to the regular and prolonged practice of the messenger of Allah. Besides this, these Ahadith prove menstruation of Sayyida Aishah much prior to the Hajja-tul-Wada:

Narrated 'Aysha: While in menses, I used to comb the hair of Allah's Apostle.³⁹⁴

³⁹² Al-Qur'an 33:34 Yousuf Ali.

³⁹³ Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed, p. 489.

³⁹⁴ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 294.

Narrated 'Aysha: **The Prophet used to lean on my lap and recite Qur'an while I was in menses.**³⁹⁵

Narrated 'Aysha: The Prophet and I used to take a bath from a single pot while we were Junub.³⁹⁶ During the menses, he used to order me to put on an Izar (dress worn below the waist) and used to fondle me. While in Itikaf, he used to bring his head near me and I would wash it while I used to be in my periods (menses).³⁹⁷

Fath-ul-Bari, Explantion of Sahih Bukhari by Ibn-e-Hajar

Narrated Aisha, Ummul Mu'minin: When the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) arrived after the expedition to Tabuk or Khaybar (the narrator is doubtful), the draught raised an end of a curtain which was hung in front of **her store-room**, revealing some dolls which belonged to her. He asked: What is this? She replied: My dolls. Among them he saw a horse with wings made of rags, and asked: What is this I see among them? She replied: A horse. He asked: What is this that it has on it? She replied: Two wings. He asked: A horse with two wings? She replied: Have you not heard that Solomon had horses with wings? She said: Thereupon the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) laughed so heartily that I could see his molar teeth.³⁹⁸

We, therefore, note with surprise that extremely small cottage of Sayyida Aishah also contained a store-room to accommodate her dolls etc. The Prophet ﷺ had continued to live with her for more than 8 years but he had no chance to look into it. May be the house also had a bathroom and a kitchen. In scuha a case it might have extended to at least 90-100 square yards. If other wives of the Prophet ﷺ also had similar accommodations attached to the Masjid-e-Nabvi, the collective space covered by them might have extended up to 900/1000 square yards. No book of history affirms the same.

The famous Hadith from Imam Ahmed narrated from Abdullah about Hajja-tul-Wada ends with the words attributed to Sayyida Aisha as quoted below:

³⁹⁵ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 296.

³⁹⁶ *Junub* means: ritually impure due to sexual intercourse or seminal discharge. A person in such a state needs to take a bath in order to become ritually pure and be able to perform his prayers.

³⁹⁷ *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Volume 1, Book 6, Hadith No. 298.

³⁹⁸ Abu Dawud, Book 41, Number 4914:

قالت انى لاذكر و انا جارية حديثه السن انى انعس فتضرب وجهى موخرة الرجل حتى جاء
بى التنعيم فاهللت بعمرة

She said I do remember while I was a girl of tender age, I would feel drowsy so my face would hit the end of the (camel's) saddle until it brought me to Taneem so we tied Ahram for Umra.³⁹⁹

This suggests that in spite of her menstruation and even after spending 9 years of her married life with the Holy Prophet ﷺ Sayyida Aisha failed to get rid of her childhood. As regards the feeling of drowsiness, it could be due to numerous other causes than tender age of a person. The last Hadith stressing tender age of Sayyida Aisha is again from Abdullah quoted from Musnad Imam Ahmed:

حدثنا عبد الله حدثني ابى حدثنا اسحاق قال حدثنى يحيى بن عباد بن عبد الله عن ابيه عباد
قال سمعت عائشة تقول مات رسول الله بين سحرى و نحرى و فى دولتى (نوبتى) لم اظلم
فيه احدا - فمن سفهى و حدائثه سنى ان رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قبض و هو فى
جحرى ثم و ضعت راسه على وسادة وقت التدم مع النساء و اضرب وجهى

Abdulah's Father said that he heard Aisha saying: "The Messenger of Allah died between my lap and my chest on my turn in which I was never unjust to anyone. **So it was due to my lack of awareness and my tender age that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ died** while he was in my lap then I put his head on a pillow and stood up **and began mourning with other women, hitting my face.**"⁴⁰⁰

Critical Evaluation of the Hadith:

We also doubt the genuineness of the last part of the Hadith i.e. starting from *فمن سفهى* and ending in *واضرب وجهى*. These words might have been later insertion in the Hadith by some adversary of Sayyida Aishah. Word *سفه* means being foolish, stupid, rash or imprudent which can in no case be ascribed to Sayyida Aishah herself. Obviously it is the handiwork of some adversary of Sayyida Aishah. In addition to the above, we also cannot believe that Sayyida

³⁹⁹ Musnad Imam Ahmed p. 245.

⁴⁰⁰ Musnad Imam Ahmed , Vol. 6, p. 274.

Aishah might have said that *وقمت التدم مع النساء و اضرب وجهي* meaning: *and stood up **and began mourning with other women, hitting my face***. Do we mean that Sayyida Aishah had been unaware of the prophet's prohibition to mourn their dead or to beat their faces? Alternatively, she was intentionally violating the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ as quoted below:

عن عبد الله بن مسعود قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليس منا من ضرب الحدود و شق الجيوب و دعا بدعوى الجاهلية (متفق عليه)

Abdullah b. Masud reported that the Messenger of Allah said: there is none among us who beats faces and tears up shirts and cries aloud like the crying of the Days of Ignorance.⁴⁰¹

Let the apologists choose between the alternatives. So far as we are concerned, we can neither attribute such derogatory words to Sayyida Aishah nor expect any transgression against the religious guidance provided by the Prophet ﷺ.

Besides this, our unjustified insistence on the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aisha at a tender age is a clear cut blasphemy against the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The critics of Islam, therefore, exploit these Ahadith to depict the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a child abuser and a paedophile. In case, we insist on truth of these Ahadith then we can no longer uphold the appellation of *انك لعلی خلق عظیم* for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. let the scholars, therefore, analyze the contents and background of the Ahadith to arrive at the truth.

There could be no valid excuse of *حادثة سنی* for the wife of the prophet after living with him for more than 9 years. We find no good purpose being served from this report except to accuse the most beloved wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during his life on earth and to be his wife in the paradise as assured by the Lord. The accusers aim at deriding her authority as interpreter of the Qur'an and a jurist of great eminence. Besides this, the immaturity attached to Sayyida Aishah also reduces her credibility about 2210 Ahadith especially, those pertaining to the domestic life of the Prophet ﷺ and matters relating to women. In case we

⁴⁰¹ *Mishkat ul Masabeeh (eng. Tr by Fazlul Karim). vol. III, p. 60.*

insist on the genuineness of the Ahadith suggesting tender age of Sayyida Aishah, we will have to destroy lot of jurisprudence, interpretations of the Qur'an and all the narratives describing the events pertaining to genesis of Islam up to the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Depiction of carelessness and immaturity in Sayyida Aishah, therefore, may erode some of the foundations of Islam.

The alleged immaturity and imprudence till the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ implies that more than 9 years companionship with the Holy Prophet ﷺ had utterly failed to bring any improvement in the conscience and childish posture of Sayyida Aishah. No such suggestion can be acceptable to the Muslim Ummah which holds that anyone who had the privilege to see the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a believer enjoys excellence over all other people who did not see him. We also know that the prominent Sahaba like Sayyidina Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali had received the title of راشدون (the rightly guided) only due to their companionship with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In this respect, we can hardly pinpoint any male companion who could claim closer companionship with the Holy Prophet ﷺ than his beloved wife Sayyida Aishah. According to the Bible, the husband "*shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh*" (Gen 2:24 KJV). Doesn't this suggest that Sayyida Aishah too deserved to be acknowledged as one flesh with the Holy Prophet ﷺ who had not only exalted her with reference to the revelations of the Qur'an but also taken the criticism against her as a harm to his own self. He said:

يَا أُمَّ سَلَمَةَ لَا تُؤْذِينِي فِي عَائِشَةَ، فَإِنَّهُ وَاللَّهِ مَا نَزَلَ عَلَيَّ الْوَحْيُ وَأَنَا فِي لِحَافِ امْرَأَةٍ مِنْكُمْ
عَيْرَهَا "

"O Um Salama! Don't harm me by harming `Aisha, for by Allah, the Divine Inspiration never came to me while I was under the blanket of any woman amongst you except her."⁴⁰²

⁴⁰² *Sahih al-Bukhari* translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Book 62, Hadith 122.

All the scholars of Islam believe that the soil or dust of earth touching the hallowed body of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the sepulchre transcends in veneration even over Ka'aba and everything else in the universe. The sepulchre is the same place where the Holy Prophet ﷺ died in the lap of Sayyida Aishah after living a peaceful life of about 9 years with her. The house of Sayyida Aishah (containing sepulchre of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) has, therefore, been declared as a garden of the paradise (رياض الجنة). All this adds to the sanctification and veneration of Sayyida Aishah in the eyes of the Ummah. Only some ill-fated person may take pleasure to harm the prophet ﷺ by pointing out certain shortcomings in her.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had been extremely happy with Sayyida Aishah till his death. It has been narrated from her that:

Gabriel came to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, with her image on a green, silken cloth and he said, "Verily, this is your wife in this world and in the Hereafter."⁴⁰³

It is, therefore, unbecoming of the believers to attribute anything denigrating the most venerated mother of the believers by suggesting immaturity, lack of knowledge or rectitude to her. They must not entertain any report disgracing the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ about whom the Almighty had declared that:

And Allah only wishes to remove all abomination from you, ye members of the Family, and to make you pure and spotless.⁴⁰⁴

Since no wish (اراده) of the Almighty can remain unfulfilled (Al-Qur'an 36:82), therefore, we must refrain from

⁴⁰³ *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Vol. 1, Book 46, Hadith No. 3880. Tirmidhi himself has counted this Hadith among Hasan (hadith whose authenticity is not as well-established as that of ṣaḥīḥ hadith, but sufficient for use as supporting evidence) and Ghareeb (a hadith conveyed by only one narrator). Some other scholars also hold the same opinion yet due to its incorporation in *Sahih Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim* most of the scholars of Hadith including Muhammad Nasiruddin Albani (1914-1999) take it as Sahih (Accurate).

⁴⁰⁴ Al-Qur'an 33:33 Yousuf Ali.

imputing anything offensive to the most venerated wives of the Prophet ﷺ. It is also worth noting here that the Almighty had decided to make the wives of the Prophet ﷺ pure and spotless only for the sake of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. How could then He be expected to tolerate accusations of child abuse on him. There could be no room for any such fault in the Prophet ﷺ.

There are numerous references to tell us that even the most knowledgeable companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had occasionally been consulting Aysha on different problems of jurisprudence. It has been reported by Abu Musa Ashari that:

ما اشكل علينا اصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حديث قط فسالنا عائشة ولا وجدنا عندها منه علما.

Whenever we, the companions of the messenger of Allah found any difficulty to understand some Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ, we consulted Aysha about it and discovered that she always had adequate knowledge about that Hadith.⁴⁰⁵

Similarly it has been reported by Urwa ibn Zubair that:

ما رايت امرأة اعلم بطب ولا فقه ولا شعر من عائشة.

I did not see any woman having more knowledge of Medicine, Jurisprudence and poetry than Aishah.⁴⁰⁶

Imam al-Zuhri (50-124 AH)⁴⁰⁷ had said that:

لو جمع علم عائشة الى جميع امهات المؤمنين وعلم جميع النساء لكان علم عائشة افضل.

⁴⁰⁵ *Shubhat o Abateel Howla Zojatirrasool*, p. 40, cited by Peer Karam Shah, *Zia-un-Nabi* (Urdu) Vol. VII (Lahore: Zia-ul-Qur'an publications, Ganj Bakhsh Rd. 1418 AH), p. 496.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ Muhammad ibn Muslim ibn Ubaydullah ibn Shihab al-Zuhri, usually referred to simply as Ibn Shihab or al-Zuhri in hadith literature. He was a central figure among the early collectors of sīra—biographies of the Islamic prophet, Muhammad and hadith literature.

If we compare the knowledge of Aysha with the combined knowledge of all other mothers of the believers and even the women companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ **we find Aysha excelling in her knowledge over them.**⁴⁰⁸

Ata bin Abi Rabah (33-114 AH)⁴⁰⁹ says:

كانت عائشة افقه الناس و احسن الناس رايا في العامة

Aisha excelled over all human beings in her comprehension of the religious matters while her opinion about public/social affairs had always been better than others.⁴¹⁰

Possibility Of Her Ignorance about Qur'an

Keeping in view the outstanding faculties of Sayyida Aishah as recorded above, we find no room for the assumption that she had not memorized or read major portion of the Qur'an till the Battle of Banu Mustaliq in Shaaban 6 A.H. The Hadith pertaining to event of Ifk attributes the following words to Sayyida Aishah وانا جارية حديثه السن لا اقرا من القرآن كثيرا. Such reporters, therefore, pretend their perfect oblivion from another Hadith in Bukhari quoted in the following:

حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ مُوسَى، أَخْبَرَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ يُسُفَ، أَنَّ ابْنَ جُرَيْجٍ، أَخْبَرَهُمْ قَالَ وَأَخْبَرَنِي يُوسُفُ بْنُ مَاهَكَ، قَالَ إِنِّي عِنْدَ عَائِشَةَ أُمِّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا - إِذْ جَاءَهَا عِرَاقِي فَقَالَ أَيُّ الْكَمَنِ خَيْرٌ قَالَتْ وَبِحَاكِ وَمَا يَصُركَ قَالَ يَا أُمُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَرَيْنِي مُصْحَفَكَ. قَالَتْ لِمَ قَالَ لَعَلِّي أُولِّقُ الْقُرْآنَ عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّهُ يَشْرَأُ عَنِّي مُؤَلِّفٌ. قَالَتْ وَمَا يَصُركَ أَيُّهُ قَرَأْتُ قَبْلُ، إِنَّمَا نَزَلَ أَوَّلَ مَا نَزَلَ مِنْهُ سُورَةٌ مِنَ الْمُفَصَّلِ فِيهَا ذِكْرُ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ حَتَّى إِذَا ثَابَ النَّاسُ إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ نَزَلَ الْحَلَالُ وَالْحَرَامُ، وَلَوْ نَزَلَ أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ لَا تَشْرَبُوا الْخَمْرَ. لَقَالُوا لَا نَدْعُ الْخَمْرَ أَبَدًا. وَلَوْ نَزَلَ. لَا تَزْنُوا. لَقَالُوا لَا نَدْعُ الزَّنا أَبَدًا. لَقَدْ نَزَلَ بِمَكَّةَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَإِنِّي لَجَارِيَةُ الْعَلْبِ بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمُ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَذْهَى وَأَمْرٌ } وَمَا نَزَلَتْ سُورَةُ الْبَقَرَةِ وَالنِّسَاءِ إِلَّا وَأَنَا عِنْدَهُ. قَالَ

⁴⁰⁸ Zia-un-Nabi (Urdu) Vol. VII, p. 497.

⁴⁰⁹ Ata ibn Abi Rabah was a prominent Tabi'i, Mufasssir, Muhaddith (Muslim transmitter of hadith), faqih and Mufti of Mecca.

⁴¹⁰ Zawjat-un-Nabi alTahirat, p. 36, cited by Zia-un-Nabi (Urdu) Vol. VII, p. 497.

فَأُخْرِجَتْ لَهُ الْمُصْحَفُ فَأَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ آتَى السُّورِ.

Narrated Yusuf bin Mahk: While I was with Aisha, the mother of the Believers, a person from Iraq came and asked, "What type of shroud is the best?" `Aisha said, "May Allah be merciful to you! What does it matter?" He said, "O mother of the Believers! Show me (the copy of) your Qur'an," She said, "Why?" He said, "**In order to compile and arrange the Qur'an according to it**, for people recite it with its Suras not in proper order." `Aisha said, "What does it matter which part of it you read first? (Be informed) that the first thing that was revealed thereof was a Sura from Al-Mufasssal, and in it was mentioned Paradise and the Fire. When the people embraced Islam, the Verses regarding legal and illegal things were revealed. If the first thing to be revealed was: 'Do not drink alcoholic drinks.' people would have said, 'We will never leave alcoholic drinks,' and if there had been revealed, 'Do not commit illegal sexual intercourse,' they would have said, 'We will never give up illegal sexual intercourse.' While **I was a young girl of playing age**, the following Verse was revealed in Mecca to Muhammad: 'Nay! But the Hour is their appointed time (for their full recompense), and the Hour will be more grievous and more bitter.' (54:46) Sura Al-Baqara (The Cow) and Surat An-Nisa (The Women) were revealed while I was with him." Then `Aisha took out the copy of the Qur'an for the man and dictated to him the Verses of the Suras (in their proper order).

The Hadith affirms competence of Sayyida Aishah to memorize and to interpret the Qur'an. As such, the playing girl of 5 Nabvi had no chances to remain freezed in the same state of mind up to another 14 years i.e. from 5 nabvi to 6 AH. Let us not forget that among the believers, she had been the only person having reported that:

Narrated Aysha: (wife of the Prophet) since I reached the age when I could remember things, I have seen my parents worshipping according to the right faith of Islam. Not a single day passed but Allah's Apostle visited us both in the morning and in the evening.⁴¹¹

⁴¹¹ Sahih Bukhari, Volume 3, Book 37, Hadith Number 494.

Being counted among the Sabiqoon al-Awwaloon, she must have been capable enough to differentiate between the true faith and the falsehood since about 1 Nabvi. Some scholars, therefore, insist on her prudence or Bulooḡh in 1 Nabvi. Even otherwise, if she had started remembering verses of the Qur'an from 5 Nabvi, she must have been memorizing the verses of the Qur'an revealed from time to time simply because the Holy prophet ﷺ had been visiting them each day in the morning as well as in the evening. Scholars do not doubt the report of Urwa b. Zubair that "*I did not see any woman having more knowledge of Medicine, Jurisprudence and poetry than Aishah.*"⁴¹² Undoubtedly she had acquired competence in the afore-stated arts from no one else than her own father i.e. Abu Bakr Siddiq who had the unique privilege of being the first believer in Islam among men. As such, we cannot assume that Abu Bakr could have neglected his household to teach the Qur'an but to teach them the genealogies and the Arabic poetry.

Abu Bakr had the habit of reciting the Qur'an loudly. The non-believers got annoyed of him due to which he decided to migrate to Abyssinia during the first migration in 5 Nabvi. Ibn-e-Daghna an influential person of Makkah met him on the way and brought him back by providing asylum to him. Sayyidina Abu Bakr, thereafter built a mosque in his house in Misfalah where he started reciting the Qur'an loudly. Being pressurized by the non-believers, Ibn-e-Daghna requested him to stop the recitation. Refusing to stop the practice of reciting the Qur'an loudly, Abu Bakr allowed Ibn-e-Daghna to withdraw his protection from him. This can, therefore, be taken as an evidence of the priority attached by Abu Bakr to the Qur'an than anything else in the world. How could, therefore, be possible for him to prefer teaching genealogies and the ancient Arabic poetry to Sayyida Aishah as compared to the Qur'an?

The critics of Sayyida Aishah in fact were bent upon showing enduring childhood and immaturity of Sayyida Aishah till the death of the Holy prophet ﷺ in Rabee-ul-Awwal 11 AH. In the Hadith of Ifk pertaining to 6 AH i.e. about 14 years after the revelation of Surah-al-Qamar, we find her described as جارية حديثة السن thrice in the narrative of

⁴¹² Peer Karam Shah, *Zia-un-Nabi* (Urdu) Vol. VII, p. 496.

Sahih Bukhari.⁴¹³ It had been attributed twice to Sayyida Aishah herself and once to Barira her maid. The phrases are:

(1) فلم يستنكر القوم خفة الهودج حين رفعوه وحملوه، وكنت جارية حديثة السن،

Those people therefore, disregarded the lightness of the howdah while lifting and carrying it; and at that time I was still a young girl.

(2) والذي بعثك بالحق، ما رأيت عليها أمراً قط أغصه أكثر من أنها جارية حديثة السن،
تنام عن عجين أهلها، فتأتي الداجن فتأكله

By Him Who has sent you with the Truth. I have never seen anything in her (i.e. Aisha) which I would conceal, except that she is a young girl who sleeps leaving the dough of her family exposed so that the domestic goats come and eat it.

(3) فقلت: وأنا جارية حديثة السن لا أقرأ من القرآن كثيراً:

In spite of the fact that I was a young girl and had a little knowledge of Quran, I said...

We, therefore, observe that words such as *جارية حديثة السن* attributed to Barira the maid of Sayyida Aishah point out lack of civility, grooming or rectitude in the girl serving in the house of the Prophet ﷺ. She displayed no good manners to refer to her mistress as *جارية* the term usually used for a girl, a slave girl or a servant, which applied more correctly to Barira herself. Sayyida had been the most esteemed mother of the believers⁴¹⁴ including Barira herself. In the Arabic literature, we find the term *جارية* nowhere applied to respectable or married woman like Sayyida Aishah. *امراة* or *نساء* is the word used in Arabic to describe the singularity or plurality of the adult women. Even the Almighty had addressed the wives of the Prophet ﷺ as *يا نساء النبي* twice in Qur'an (33:30, 32). The term *نساء* applies only to adult women while tender-aged girls cannot be addressed with that epithet. This shows that none of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a tender-aged girl. At

⁴¹³ *Sahih Bukhari*, Hadith Number 4750, cited by *The Noble Qur'an* Vol. V, 24:12, (Riyadh: Darussalam Pub., KSA, 2000), p. 242-244.

⁴¹⁴ Al-Qur'an 33:6.

another place the Almighty had distinguished them with the appellation اهل البيت (33:33). As such, any denigration of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ involves also the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. The Lord also addressed the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as ازواج النبی (33:6, 28, 50, 52, 53, 59 etc.) which usually depicts the spouse or the pair who shared even the nobility or degradation of the other. The term زوج also denotes کفو of the Prophet ﷺ which usually means alike or equal to the other. We also must keep in mind that the Almighty had distinguished the wives of the Prophet ﷺ by addressing them that لستن كاحد من النساء (33:32).

In this respect, we must also recall the words of the Prophet ﷺ that: **"O Um Salama! Don't harm me by harming `Aisha,"**⁴¹⁵ The words of the Holy Prophet from the pulpit i.e. *"O the community of Muslims who amongst you will be relieving me from (the calumnies of) the person who had hurt me about my wife (Aishah)"* must also serve as a guidance to the Muslim community not to harm the Prophet ﷺ by suggesting anything degrading Sayyida Aishah. Last of all the warning of the Almighty that **"O ye who believe! Be ye not like those who vexed and insulted Moses"**,⁴¹⁶ should serve as the enduring guidance of the Lord to refrain from anything that spoils the image of the Prophet ﷺ or the members of his family. In addition to the above, the Lord also warned the believers that:

... Nor is it right for you that ye should annoy Allah's Messenger, or that ye should marry his widows after him at any time. Truly such a thing is in Allah's sight an enormity.⁴¹⁷

No believer must, therefore, get near to anything that may tarnish the luminous image of the Prophet ﷺ.

The reporters should have, therefore, followed the Qur'an to describe the wife of the Prophet ﷺ as جارية than امرأة, which can be considered as a derogatory term against the most respected mother of the believers. In case Barira had no obligation to stress on the the immaturity and neglectfulness of Sayyida Aishah, she could have referred to

⁴¹⁵ *Sahih Bukhari*, Book 62, Hadith No. 122.

⁴¹⁶ Al-Qur'an 33:69, Yousuf Ali.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, 33:53 (Yusuf Ali).

her as امرأة instead of جارية حديث السن. Instead of Barira, therefore, these words suggesting immaturity and carelessness of Sayyida Aishah seem to be an insertion in the report by those who had some rancor against the beloved and venerable wife of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The long narrative, therefore, seems to highlight only the immaturity and tender age of Sayyida Aishah than to focus on the evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. It was only to degrade Sayyida Aishah that the forgerers had to attribute to her the words that:

وانا جارية حديث السن لا اقرا كثيرا من القرآن

I was a young girl and did not have much knowledge of the Qur'an.

Prof. Muhammad Tahir Ali Hashmi has reported the same part of the Hadith in the following words: i.e. وانا جارية حديث السن لم اقرا كثيرا من القرآن (and I was a girl of tender age who had not read a large portion of the Qur'an).⁴¹⁸

In this respect, we observe that shallow knowledge of Sayyida Aishah about Qur'an had neither any relevance to the incidence of Ifk nor could it be used as a plea to exonerate her from the charge. No one except the Almighty cleared her of the calumny, the Munafiqoon had uttered against her. The insertion لم اقرا كثيرا من القرآن might have, therefore, been made in the Hadith by some opponents of Sayyida Aishah to deny her sagacity and scholastic eminence among the Muslim community. Besides irrelevance to the occasion, the phrase لم اقرا كثيرا من القرآن also stands rebutted by her quoting the correct excerpt of the Qur'an i.e. { فصبر جميل والله المستعان على ما تصفون }.⁴¹⁹ As against this, the supporters of the genuineness of لم اقرا كثيرا من القرآن take the plea that Sayyida Aishah had forgotten the name of Jacob the father of yousuf. We, however, attach no importance to the argument that Sayyida Aishah did not remember the name "Yaqoob" due to which she did not mention him by name. We do not know how such commentators will interpret the verse (Al-اذ قال يوسف لانيه-----

⁴¹⁸ 'Umar-e-Aisha par Tehqeeqi Nazar. p. 97.

⁴¹⁹ Al-Qur'an 12:18.

Qur'an 12:4). Instead of mentioning the names of the brothers of Yusuf, the Almighty too called them "أخوته" (Al-Qur'an 12:7). Similarly, the Qur'an referred to نمرود, أزر, and فرعون only with their titles instead of their names. Does it mean that the Lord did not remember their names?

The phrase لم اقرأ كثيرا من القرآن attributed to Sayyida Aishah sometime after Ghazwa Bani Mustaliq in 6 AH has no compatibility with the early conversion to Islam by at least her father, mother and the elder sister including herself. She also had been cleared of the calumny of the Munafiqoon by Almighty himself. Being one of the Sabiqoon al Awwaloon, she might have started memorizing the verses of the Qur'an since 1 Nabvi. Even according to the Hadith in *Sahih Bukhari*⁴²⁰, she had memorized the Ayah (54:46) of Surah al-Qamar in 4 or 5 Nabvi. Eversince then, she had lived constantly under the supervision of Sayyidina Abu Bakr and the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. How could it be possible then that she could have missed to learn by heart any revelation in the Qur'an. After the said occasion, she had another 9 years to live at Makkah and Medina and about 5 years thereafter in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself. In view of this, we find no possibility of her remaining حديث السن till 6 AH. Similarly, there could be no truth in the words لم اقرأ كثيرا من القرآن attributed to her. No believer can, therefore, deny or question the validity of the words of the Prophet ﷺ that:

"O Um Salama! Don't harm me by harming `Aisha, for by Allah, the Divine Inspiration never came to me while I was under the blanket of any woman amongst you except her"⁴²¹

God's Warning to the Believers

Non-believers as usual had been trying to find some excuse for refusing to follow the teachings of faith and conduct of the prophets. They, therefore, eagerly searched for any fault in the teachings, personality, family background, household or moral character of the prophets. Failing to find genuine reasons to obey the men of God, they even

⁴²⁰ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 6, Book 61, Hadith Number 515.

⁴²¹ *Sahih Bukhari*, Book 62, Hadith No. 122.

resorted to fabricate various calumnies to defame them. The Almighty had, therefore, been rescuing His prophets from all vilifications of their enemies so that the messengers of Allah may continue to lead the people on the straight path. For this, we also find elaborate guidance of the Lord for the believers in the Bible as well as in the Qur'an. The Almighty always treated the defamatory attempts of the mischief mongers as annoyance to His prophets. He, therefore, guided them to glorify the Lord by the most beautiful names and to refrain from any blasphemy against the Almighty and His prophets. God said:

The most beautiful names belong to Allah: so call on him by them; but shun such men as use profanity in his names: for what they do, they will soon be requited.⁴²²

The believers had, therefore, been given the enduring guidance not to utter anything that may annoy the Holy Prophet ﷺ of the Lord. They were warned not to follow the manner of the people who were annoying Moses (عليه السلام). God had effectively cleared Moses (عليه السلام) from the calumnies while the believers were advised to fear Allah and to speak the right word so that the Almighty may put their deeds into a right state for them, and forgive them their faults. God said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ آذَوْا مُوسَىٰ فَبَرَّاهُ اللَّهُ مِمَّا قَالُوا وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَجِيهًا - يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا - يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

69. O ye who believe! Be ye not like those who vexed and insulted Moses, but Allah cleared him of the (calumnies) they had uttered: and he was honourable in Allah's sight. **70.** O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and (always) say a word directed to the Right. **71.** That He may make your conduct whole and sound and forgive you your sins: He that obeys Allah and His Messenger, has already attained the highest achievement.⁴²³

⁴²² Al-Qur'an 7:180 Yousuf Ali.

⁴²³ Al-Qur'an 33:69-71 Yousuf Ali.

It is worth noting here that the verses quoted above serve as preamble to the Amanahh⁴²⁴ i.e. the **Trust or Covenant of the Lord with humankind** (Al-Qur'an 33:72). Muslims must not, therefore, utter or entertain any words that cause annoyance to the prophets or cause any damage to the glorious person or families of the Prophets. Believers must refrain from repeating the slanders causing annoyance to the messenger of the Lord. (Al-Qur'an 33:69, 24:12-20). They must not close their eyes to the repeated warnings of the Lord such as quoted below:

(...) Nor is it right for you that ye should annoy Allah's Messenger, (...) ⁴²⁵

Those who annoy Allah and His Messenger - Allah has cursed them in this World and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating Punishment. ⁴²⁶

(...) Those who vex the messenger of Allah, for them there is a painful doom. ⁴²⁷

The acid test for acceptance of the traditions must, therefore, be that the news may not be causing any annoyance to the Holy Prophet ﷺ or his family as we find in the incidence of Ifk during the battle of Banu Mustaliq in which the Munafiqoon had concocted certain calumnies against Sayyida Aishah. Such news vexed the Holy Prophet ﷺ to the extent that he rose up to the pulpit to address the believers that:

يا معشر المسلمين من يعذرني من رجل قد بلغني عنه اذاه في اهلي-

O the community of Muslims who amongst you will be relieving me from (the calumnies of) **the person who had hurt me about my wife** (Aishah).

It is evident from the above that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had personally felt hurt or injured due to derogatory or defamatory words the Munafiqoon like Abdullah b. Ubai b. Salool had uttered against Sayyida Aisha the beloved wife

⁴²⁴ For the detailed discussion refer to chapter on Amanahh in our book *The New World Order*.

⁴²⁵ Al-Qur'an 33:53 Yousuf Ali.

⁴²⁶ Al-Qur'an 33:57 Yousuf Ali.

⁴²⁷ Al-Qur'an 9:61 Pikthal.

of the Prophet ﷺ. He, therefore, appealed to the community to relieve him from the blasphemy. It is, however, on record that in the likeness of Musa (عليه السلام) the Almighty himself came to the rescue of Sayyida Aishah and the Holy Prophet ﷺ from the slanders of the munafiqoon much before the believers could take any action to redress the grievance. Surah Al-Noor (24) contains the Divine rebuttal of the calumny, admonition to the offenders and guidance to the believers. We are, therefore, quoting below only those verses of the Surah which are more relevant to our discussion here. First of all the following:

3. Let no man guilty of adultery or fornication marry and but a woman similarly guilty, or an Unbeliever: nor let any but such a man or an Unbeliever marry such a woman: to the believers such a thing is forbidden. 4. And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegations), - flog them with eighty stripes; and reject their evidence ever after: for such men are wicked transgressors;- 5. Unless they repent thereafter and mend (Their conduct); for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.⁴²⁸

The verses quoted above, therefore, contain an everlasting warning to the believers to refrain from marrying the women who had been guilty of adultery or fornication. As regards the prophets, they being chosen people of the Lord, remain under constant watch and ward of the Almighty who guards them against any divergence from the highest standards of morality as per commandments of the Lord. There, as such, could be no possibility of any abomination in the household of the Holy Prophet ﷺ against the intention of the Almighty (Al-Qur'an 33:33). Hence, any wife of the Prophet ﷺ falling short of the exalted standard of morality had no chance to remain in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was, however, a must for the accusers to adduce evidence of four witnesses to prove the guilt. In case they failed to do so, they had to be penalized as per verdict of the Lord as per Al-Qur'an 24:4 referred to above.

⁴²⁸ Al-Qur'an 24:3-5 Yousuf Ali.

The Munafiqoon had fabricated false accusations against Sayyida Aishah. The Almighty, therefore, revealed verses 24:11-20 to declare innocence of Sayyida Aishah in the matter. God said:

11. Those who brought forward the lie are a body among yourselves: think it not to be an evil to you; On the contrary it is good for you: to every man among them (will come the punishment) of the sin that he earned, and to him who took on himself the lead among them, will be a penalty grievous. **12.** Why did not the believers - men and women - when ye heard of the affair, - put the best construction on it in their own minds and say, "**This (charge) is an obvious lie**"? **13. Why did they not bring four witnesses to prove it?** When they have not brought the witnesses, such men, in the sight of Allah, (stand forth) themselves as liars! **14.** Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, in this world and the Hereafter, a grievous penalty would have seized you in that **ye rushed glibly into this affair.** **15.** Behold, ye received it on your tongues, and said out of your mouths things of which ye had no knowledge; and ye thought it to be a light matter, while it was most serious in the sight of Allah. **16.** And why did ye not, when ye heard it, say? - "**It is not right of us to speak of this: Glory to Allah! this is a most serious slander!**" **17.** Allah doth admonish you, that ye may never repeat such (conduct), if ye are (true) Believers. (...) **19.** Those who love (to see) scandal published broadcast among the Believers, will have a grievous Penalty in this life and in the Hereafter: Allah knows, and ye know not. **20.** Were it not for the grace and mercy of Allah on you, and that Allah is full of kindness and mercy, (ye would be ruined indeed).⁴²⁹

The revelation, therefore, leaves no ambiguity about the strict notice of the Almighty against the maligning attitude of the Munafiqoon. Besides issuing a stern warning to the people to refrain from such misdeeds in future, the Lord also provided them with elaborate guidance for righteous conduct in future. Since the admonition had been necessitated due to the slander against Sayyida Aishah, therefore, the believers had the lesson not to entertain any vilifying news against her unless the same is attested as per guidance of the Lord. Hence, all Ahadith alleging childhood, ignorance, carelessness or any other blemish against Sayyida Aishah must be scrutinized under the

⁴²⁹ Al-Qur'an 24:11-20 Yousuf Ali.

guidance provided by the Lord in the verses 11-20 quoted above. Instead of eagerness to prove the contents of Sihah Khamsa true, we must take cognisance of the fact that the consummation of marriage with a female of 9 lunar years depicts Sayyida Aishah merely as an innocent victim of atrocity. As per precepts of Islam, such allegations do not afflict the piety, moral integrity or prominence of the victim. The blemish of being a child abuser may however cause an irreparable loss to the most exalted moral character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. The enemies of Islam, therefore, took due advantage of the fabrications aiming at vilifying Sayyida Aishah to spoil not only the luminous image of the Holy Prophet ﷺ but also to ridicule the teachings of Islam. They alleged the Holy Prophet ﷺ to be a '*Demon Possessed Paedophile*'. The articles titled '*The Qur'an Explicitly Condone Paedophilia*' and other disinformation are based on the same misconception. The Western critics argue that their observations are based on the Islamic scriptures i.e. Sihah Khamsa which they present as the accepted truth about Islam.

Majority of the Muslim laymen are unaware of the fact that Hisham b. Urwa had been the main source to transmit the news about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah for the first time at Kufah in 145 AH. He reported it from his father Urwa who in turn quoted the words attributed to Sayyida Aishah. As such, as per guidance of the Qur'an persons like Ali b. Mus'hir and his disciples were dutibound to ask for four witnesses to attest the information before hastening to transmit it to their successors (Al-Qur'an 24:13). They had no justification to believe in the extremely belated and odd information without verification as per commandment of the Lord. Further transmitters of the news also cannot absolve themselves of the obligation to utter that: "***It is not right of us to speak of this: Glory to Allah! This is a most serious slander!***" (Al-Qur'an 24:16). Alas! Some of the people confessing themselves to be believers continued to insist on credibility of the narrative in spite of the fact that the Almighty had strictly admonished them not to repeat the slander (Al-Qur'an 24:17-20). We find no trace of prepubescent consummation of marriage among the ancient Arabs. While the Qur'an explicitly insisted on

بلغوا النكاح, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also did not permit marriage or sex before Bulooḡh of the spouses. The tradition of consuming the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at 9 lunar years had neither been known to the first five generations of Muslims nor did it exist among them. None of the four great jurists of Islam discussed about the tender age of Sayyida Aishah nor any of them opined about Bulooḡh before 15 years of age. Child marriage serves no good purpose to glorify Islam or its Prophet ﷺ. Due to its incompatibility with the Qur'an, the spirit of Islam and non-existence of the tradition among the earliest generations of Muslims, we have no option except to reject the Hadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa.

The event of consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah by the Holy Prophet ﷺ must have been known to the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, the news might also have reached all the enemies of Islam at Makkha and Medina. Had there been any oddity in the event, the same must have been reported by thousands and thousands of the friends and foes. It is, therefore, strange to find that the report attributed to Sayyida Aishah has not been corroborated by any other report from the Sahaba or the relatives of Sayyida Aishah. The news is kept secret from all people except Hisham b. Zubir till his death in 94 AH. Hisham also does not disclose it to anyone at Makkah, Medina or Hijaz throughout his life. It was in about 145 AH that he is believed to have narrated to his disciples at Kufah. No one seems to have asked Hisham to produce four witnesses to attest the news he was revealing for the first time at Kufah in about 145 AH i.e. about 144 years after the event, about 135 years after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and 87 years after the death of Sayyida Aishah. Although the news had reportedly been known also to other disciples of Hisham at Basra and Baghdad in 145 AH yet only Ali b. Mus'hir publicised the news for the first time during 185-189 AH in Kufah. The news, therefore, loses its varacity due to its long concealment, non-verification from reliable sources and non-adoption of the tradition by the companions of the Prophet ﷺ and about five generations thereafter.

Concluding Remarks about the Age of Sayyida Aisha

In the very beginning, we may stress that the primary aim of Islam had been to provide true teachings of faith to worship one and the only Lord God of the Universe by avoiding idolatry or belief in any other God besides the Almighty. Muslims, therefore, believe in all the prophets of the Lord and the books revealed by Him through them. Qur'an is, therefore, the main source of faith in the Almighty and essential precepts of law. For implementation of the law, practical shape of the rituals and prayers etc., they need to know about the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ as per his legacy apparent from collective replication by the Sahaba and their descendants. The discussion about the age of Sayyida Aishah, therefore, does not form part of the Islamic faith or traditions as observed during the genesis of Islam and many generations thereafter. As regards the reports about the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah at a tender age, the same had reportedly originated firstly at Kufah in 145 AH but we find no trace of the same anywhere except Iraq up to the end of 2nd century AH. In this respect the words of Sayyidina Ali and Ibn-e-Abbas must serve as permanent guidance to the believers. Hadhrat Ali (RA) said:

حدثوا الناس بما يعرفون و دعوا ما ينكرون

Narrate only those Ahadith which are familiar to the common people and drop those that are alien to them.⁴³⁰

We know that Sayyidina Ali had been assassinated in 40 AH. It was, therefore, sometime before his death that he decreed not to accept any Hadith which had not been familiar with the Muslim Ummah till then. The verdict perhaps aimed at precluding the possibility of fabrication of new Ahadith. In the present case Hisham b. Urwa had reportedly narrated the Hadith at Kufah for the first time in

⁴³⁰ Mawlana Munazir Hasan Gilani, *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu (Karachi: Idara Majlis-e-Ilmi, 1956), p. 472. (Tranlated into English by us).

about 145 AH during the period of his blindness, superannuation and psychosis. Those who disapprove the use of word psychosis for Hisham b. Urwa may please refer to account of Hisham b. Urwa in Chapter Titled "*Prominent Figures in the Chain of Narrators*" s.v. *Hisham b. Urwa*. Perhaps he and his followers could not visualize that besides disparaging the figure of Sayyida Aishah, the consummation of her marriage at a tender age was likely to inflict the allegations of child-molestation and paedophilia on the most luminous person of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We, therefore, believe that instead of having anything beneficial in it, the report seriously impairs Islam as a religion of nature.

The Sahaba like Ibn Abbas (d. 68 AH) is reported having said:

فلا نأخذ إلا ما نعرف

We never accept the odd/ unfamiliar narratives.⁴³¹

Alqama, one of the distinguished pupils of Abdullah bin Masood also said:

ان من الحديث حديثا له ضوء كضوء النهار تعرفه و ان من الحديث حديثا له ظلمة كظلمة الليل تنكره

Among the Ahadith, there are certain Ahadith shining like the daylight while there are a few which have the darkness of the night being unfamiliar to you.⁴³²

Ibn Jawzi said:

كل حديث رايته يخالف العقل او يناقض الاصول فاعلم انه موضوع

Any Hadith about which you think is against the reason or it conflicts with the fundamentals may be understood as forged or fabricated one.⁴³³

⁴³¹ *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu, p. 478.

⁴³² *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu, p. 465.

⁴³³ *Tadween-e-Hadith*, Urdu, p. 462.

Since the Hadith conflicts with the injunctions in the Qur'an, other Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ and fundamental reasoning, therefore, we attach no credibility to it.

The jurisprudence of Islam had already been completed by the four great jurists of mainstream Islam about 60 years earlier than the Ahadith attributed to Hisham b. Urwa or others got their circulation outside Iraq. In spite of the fact that these reports had no impact on faith or jurisprudence we need to rebut the same because the adversaries of Islam are exploiting the same to malign Islam as well as the Prophet ﷺ of Islam.

As discussed earlier, the Fitna of the assassination of Sayyidina Uthman, the third caliph of Islam had created the first rift in the Islamic Ummah during which it stood divided among the companions of Sayyidina Ali on one side and Sayyida Aishah, Talha and Zubair with large number of companions of the Prophet ﷺ and Tabieen on the other. Our present discussion, therefore, aims at restoration of the truth by rebutting the disinformation spread by a faction of Muslims in Iraq to damage the par excellence scholarship, nobility and rectitude of Sayyida Aisha. We, therefore, conclude that:

1) Marriage in Islam is solemnized as a widely proclaimed event. Instead of keeping it secret it is publicized among all the people in the society so that they may acknowledge the spouses as a husband and a wife. As such, we cannot imagine any possibility of the contract and consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aishah to be an event hidden from the believers, the Jews or other enemies of Islam including the Munafiqoon. Had there been any oddity in this marriage, the same could not have escaped the notice of the friends or bitter criticism from the enemies of Islam. Since there never had been any criticism on this matrimonial affair up to the end of the third century AH, it must have been free from all evils inviting objections from the society. This, therefore, stands as an irrefutable argument that the marriage of Sayyida Aisha had been consumed in her full maturity and in accordance with the norms of the people of Arabia. We know that there had been more than a hundred thousand companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. No one among them had any news about

the consummation of this marriage at such a tender age as we find it attributed to Hisham son of Urwa reporting it from Sayyida Aisha herself. The news gets its publication at kufa during 185-189 AH i.e. about 184 years after the event and about 175 years after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It must, therefore, be treated as fake.

2) According to Imam Bukhari:

Narrated Yusuf bin Mahik: I was in the house of 'Aisha, the mother of the Believers. She said, "This revelation: "Nay, but the Hour is their appointed time (for their full recompense); and the Hour will be most grievous and most bitter." (54:46) was revealed to Muhammad at Mecca while I was a playful little girl."⁴³⁴

It has been observed that the entire Surah had been revealed during four Nabvi at Makkah (see p. 488 of *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha*). The words "I was a playful little girl" seems to be a later addition in the words of Sayyida Aishah to conform her statement to the narrative attributed to Ibn-e-Hisham. Even though the Hadith shows Sayyida Aishah a playful little girl yet she seems to have perfect awareness about the contents and importance of the Surah. She could not, therefore, be less than ten or eleven years. As such, there could be no possibility of her being of 9 years age at the time of the consummation of her marriage which took place more than ten years after the revelation of the Surah.

3) Imam Tabri (d. 310) mentions that Sayyidina Abu Bakr had married Qateela who gave birth to Abdullah and Asma. He also married Umm Rumman b. Aamir from whom were born Abdurrahman and Aishah. **According to him all these four offsprings of Abu Bakr were born during Jahilliyyah i.e. before the start of the missionary period of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.** This also shows that Sayyida Aisha was more than 13 years at the time of Hijrah. Hence, by the time of the consummation of her marriage in 1st or 2nd AH she must have been beyond 15 years or more. There as such is no question of the consummation of her marriage at the age of 9 years.

4) According to Wikipedia, Abdurrahman had been the eldest son of Abu Bakr born during 595-600 AD. His step

⁴³⁴ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 6, Book 60, Hadith Number 399.

sister, Asma bint Abu Bakr has also been reported having born 595 AD which could be 27 BH. May be both Abdurrahman and Asma had been born during the same year but Abdurrahman might have been elder than Asma. Since there had been no other children between Abdurrahman and Sayyida Aishah, therefore, she could be assumed two or three years younger to him. In such a case Sayyida Aishah's age at the time of Hijrah could be 24 years or so. As against this, the birth of Sayyida Aishah about eight years before Hijrah (as per Hisham's reports about her age) shows a gap of 19 years between the two offspring of Umm-e-Rooman. The historians had neither pointed out this difference nor did they give any reasons for this inordinate delay in the birth of the first and the 2nd child. Let us bring on record that Abdurrahman the eldest son of Abi Bakr was a full brother of Sayyida Aishah who was born about 27 years before Hijrah. He had been a strong man and a fierce fighter among the Quraish. The Historians mention him at No. 1 among the six brave men of Quraish chosen by them to assassinate the Holy prophet Muhammad ﷺ on the night of Hijrah. They included Abdurrahman b. Abi Bakr, Ikrama b. Abi Jahl, Khalid b. Waleed, Amr b. al-Aas, Tha'alab b. Abi Talib, Aqeel b. Abi Talib and others.⁴³⁵ Abdurrahman did not convert to Islam up to the Treaty of Hdaybiah 6 AH. In spite of this, it was through him that Abu Bakr's family had the distinction of being companions of the Holy Prophet of Islam ﷺ for four successive generations. They included Abu Ateeq Muhammad, Abdurrahman, Abu Bakr Siddique and Abu Qahafa.

It was due to such considerations that the Holy Prophet ﷺ instructed his companions in the following words:

خذو نصف دينكم عن هذه الحميراء

Acquire half of the knowledge of your religion from this Humaira (the one having redish hair).

⁴³⁵ Muhammad b. Jareer Tabri, Vol. II, p. 128.

All this suggests that Aysha could not have gained such a prominence in all these faculties without spending about 9 years in the company of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She, therefore, must have joined the Prophet ﷺ when she was fully mature to remember and comprehend the words uttered by the last and final Prophet of the Lord. It would have been impossible for a teenager to preserve the words of the Prophet accurately or to have perfect understanding of the complicated matters of jurisprudence concerning men as well as women. She, therefore, was a great scholar of Islam and a role model of piety who served as a teacher and exemplar of the high characteristics of Islam by surviving for about 48 years after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. She died in 58 AH at the age of 74 years. No other Muslim woman could claim equality in knowledge with her. Hence, showing Aysha just as a teenager at the time of the death of the Prophet ﷺ could be an attempt of the Shiites to reduce her authority in the matters of jurisprudence and authenticity of the Ahadith narrated by her. As against them, we conclude that Aishah had joined the Prophet ﷺ at the age of 18 to 19 years and she was about 28 or 29 years at the time of his death. Before closing the discussion, we may record the meaning of a Hadith in *Sahih Bukhari* to demonstrate that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not approve any criticism against Aysha:

Narrated Hisham's father: The people used to send presents to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the day of `Aisha's turn. `Aisha said, "My companions (i.e. the other wives of the Prophet) gathered in the house of Um Salama and said, "O Um Salama! By Allah, the people choose to send presents on the day of `Aisha's turn and we too, love the good (i.e. presents etc.) as `Aisha does. You should tell Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) to tell the people to send their presents to him wherever he may be, or wherever his turn may be." Um Salama said that to the Prophet and he turned away from her, and when the Prophet (ﷺ) returned to her (i.e. Um Salama), she repeated the same, and the Prophet (ﷺ) again turned away, and when she told him the same for the third time, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, **"O Um Salama! Don't harm me by harming `Aisha, for by Allah, the Divine Inspiration never came to me while I was under the blanket of any woman amongst**

you except her."⁴³⁶

5) Sayyida Aisha has been counted among the Sabiqoon al-Awwaloon (earliest converts to Islam) by most of the biographers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ⁴³⁷ e.g. *Seerat Ibn-e-Hisham* contains a list of the persons as Sabiqoon al-Awwaloon in which he has referred to Asma bint Abi Bakr and Aishah bint Abi Bakr among the first people who embraced Islam. He reported that:

ثم اسلم ابو عبيده بن الجراح و اساء بنت ابى بكر و عائشة بنت ابى بكر و هى يومئذ
صغيرة

The afore-stated list refers mostly to those people who converted to Islam in the 1st Nabvi or so i.e. about 12-13 years before Hijrah.⁴³⁸ Even *Seerat-Unnabaviyyah* of Ibn Hisham Vol. 1, p. 260, (Urdu, Lahore) records Sayyida Aisha at number 19 among those who confessed faith during 1 Nabvi. For details please see three lists at page 476-479 of *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha*. As such, the acceptance of Islam by Sayyida Aisha in 1 Nabvi shows her mature enough to determine the right from the wrong. Usually this happens at the age of 13-15 years. By the time of Hijra, therefore, Sayyida Aisha might have been at the age of 26 or 27 years. The consummation of her marriage a year or so, thereafter, was perfectly in accordance with the norms of the Arabian society without any oddity in it. As against this, the Ahadith ascribed to Hisham b. Urwa and others at Kufah in 145 AH show her Nikah at the age of 6 years in 10 Nabvi and consummation of her marriage 5 years thereafter at the age of 9 years which is not only mathematically incorrect but also against the facts of history.

⁴³⁶ *Sahih al-Bukhari* Hadith, Book 62, Hadith 122.

⁴³⁷ 1. *Hayat-e-Sayyid al-Arab*, 2. *Seerat-e-Ibn-e-Ishaq* through *Seerat Ibn Hisham*, 3. *Muhibb Alladunnya*, 4. *Commentry by Zargani* etc. (p. 487, *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha* by Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed).

⁴³⁸ *Seerat-e-Ibn-e-Hisham*, (Urdu), tr. by Shiekh M. Ismaeel Panipati (Lahore: Maqbool Academy, Cowk Anarkali), p. 126.

The historians who count Sayyida Aishah among Sabiqoon al-Awwaloon insist on her maturity i.e. prudence for confessing Islam in 1 Nabvi. They argue that confession could be meaningful only if the confessor had been of 14-15 years or so. Hence according to them a girl of 14 years in 1 Nabvi must have been of 27 or 28 years by the time of Hijra.

Other scholars following the narrative attributed to Sayyida Aishah herself suggest her prudence in 4 or 5 Nabvi i.e. at the time of revelation of the verse **بَلِّ السَّاعَةَ مَوْعِدَهُمُ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَى وَأَمْرٌ** from Surah al-Qamar about 8-9 years before Hijra. In the absence of any exact definition of the age of prudence, we cannot presume it before 7 to 8 years. Even according to this estimation, Sayyida Aishah might have been of about 16 years at the time of Hijrah. As such, there seems no possibility of her being 9 years old till 1 or 2 AH i.e. by the time of the consummation of her marriage.

As one of the Sabiqoon al-Awwaloon Sayyida Aishah might have confessed Islam in 1 Nabvi. Many scholars, therefore, believe that she was in her Bulooch then. According to others even if we assume her to be a **حديثة السن** i.e. a playing girl of 7-8 years in 1 Nabvi, she should have been of about $13+7 = 19$ or 20 years by the time of Hijrah. According to Hadith of *Sahih Bukhari* (Volume 6, Book 61, Number 515) quoted earlier, the Ayah of Surah al-Qamar i.e. **بَلِّ السَّاعَةَ مَوْعِدَهُمُ** had been revealed in the 8th Nabvi when Sayyida Aishah was **جارية لعب** i.e. a playing girl. Assuming that the playing girl denoted a girl of 7-8 years in 8th Nabvi, she should have been of about 12 or 13 years by the time of Hijrah. Her age by the time of Ifk i.e. Shaaban 6th AH should, therefore, have been 18 or 19 years. Where was, therefore, the justification to describe Sayyida Aishah as 'حديثة السن' in 6 AH.

The lowest estimation of the age of Sayyida Aishah can be derived from the Hadith in *Sahih Bukhari* containing narrative attributed to Sayyida Aishah herself that she was a **جارية لعب** i.e. playful girl by the time of the revelation of Surah Al-Qamar in 4th or 5th Nabvi. Even so, she should have been of about 13 years at the time of Hijra and 14-15 years by 1 or 2 AH. We, therefore, find no possibility of the tender age i.e. 9 years of Sayyida Aishah by the time she joined the Holy Prophet ﷺ. In case Sayyida Aishah had

been جارية العب (i.e. 7-8 years old) in 4th or 5th Nabvi, there could be no possibility of her remaining جارية العب for another 9 years till 1 or 2 Hijrah i.e. the time of consummation of her marriage. By that time she must have been of about 16-17 years. There as such could be no possibility of the consummation of the marriage of Sayyida Aisha at the age of 9 years as per last words in the Hadith No. 26288 of Musnad Imam Ahmed. It is perhaps due to such contradictions in the narrative that scholars like Hakeem Nyaz Ahmed have elaborately pointed out the shortcomings in the Ahadith. For details please see the discussions from pg. 70 to 160 of his book *Tehqeeq-e-Umar-e-Aisha Siddiqah*. Referring to the narrative of this Hadith in Sahih Muslim, the author points out that (وانا يومئذ.....) did not form part of the Hadith (p. 149). On the very next page, he points out that originally the narrative in Musnad Ahmed had no reference about the age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of her Nikah. According to him, the said part had been added by the later compilers on the basis of the narrative of Ali b. Mus'hir. For detailed study, please see p. 150-160 of the book. Keeping in view this and the discussions of various other scholars on the subject, we tend to believe that (وانا يومئذ ابنة ست سنين) and (وانا يومئذ ابنة تسع سنين) in the Hadith of Musnad Imam Ahmed are later additions in it.

6. The consummation of marriage with a child of 9 years is a clearcut violation of the precondition of بلغوا النكاح suggested by the Qur'an. In case we take the Hadith as a true report of facts, it will imply that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had willfully transgressed the guidance of the Lord. This means that the prophet might have followed his own desires than the commandments of the Lord. All such assumptions stand ruled out by the observation of Sayyida Aishah that:

(...) And who amongst you can have control over his desires as the messenger of Allah had over his desires?⁴³⁹

7. Since all the prophets of the Lord live under constant watch of the Almighty, therefore, they enjoyed full protection of the Lord from following their own desires and

⁴³⁹ Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 1, Book 4, Hadith No. 578.

passions. We have already discussed the same in detail. In view of the above, we have no other option except to reject all the fabrications that directly or indirectly aim at soiling the most exalted character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

MODERN CRITICS AND THE ORIENTALISTS

Although there had been many Jews and Christian saints and scholars who right from the inception of Islam had devoted their lives to denigrate Islam yet they progressed rapidly during the medieval times under the sponsorship of the church and the kings. In the modern times, there had been the so called orientalist and scholars who devoted their entire lives in the service of different governments and corporate sectors only to propagate against Islam. We, therefore, find orientalists and scholars like Washington Irving (1783-1859), William Muir (1819-1905) Dermenghem (1892-1971), Lammenes (1862-1937), Karen Armstrong (b. 1944), Barnaby Rogerson (b. 1960) having the mania to implicate the Holy Prophet ﷺ by magnifying certain gossips and frivolous reports against him. In the present context, therefore, we shall be concentrating on the scandalization of the Prophet ﷺ by involving his marriage with Sayyida Aishah and his reported visit to the house of Sayyida Zainab and Zaid. First of all, therefore, we pick up William Muir as a representative of critics like him. In his book titled '*Life of Muhammad*' (1861), the Scottish orientalist and colonial administrator, William Muir observes that:

Mohammad was now near threescore years of age: but **weakness for the sex** seemed but to grow with age⁴⁴⁰; and

⁴⁴⁰ We strongly rebut the unnatural assumption of Mr. Muir alleging that the Prophet's weakness for sex was growing with age. Had it been so he would have fathered many children from some of his wives who were quite young and capable of bearing children. Having no children except Abraham his son from Mariya, therefore, shows decline in the virility of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Even otherwise People with growing weakness for sex choose young and beautiful virgins for their enjoyment. History bears no evidence to the fact that any sex-maniac had ever preferred to enjoy sex by marrying the divorcees or widows including those past child bearing age. After his marriage with Aishah, the so called sex increasing with age did not excite the Prophet ﷺ either to free sex or to choose beautiful

the attractions of his increasing *harīm* instead of satisfying appear rather to have stimulated desire after **new and varied charms**. Happening one day to visit his adopted son Zeid, he found him absent. As he knocked, Zeinab his wife, **now over thirty years of age, but fair to look upon**, invited him to enter; and, starting up in her loose and scanty dress, made haste to array herself for his reception. **But the beauties of her figure through the half-opened door had already unveiled themselves too freely before the admiring gaze of Mohammad. He was smitten by the sight:** 'Gracious Lord! 'he exclaimed; 'Good heavens! how Thou dost turn the hearts of men!' The rapturous words, repeated in a low voice as he turned to go, were overheard by Zeinab who perceived **the flame she had kindled**, and, proud of her conquest was nothing loth to tell her husband of it. Zeid went straightway to Mohammad, and declared his readiness to divorce Zeinab for him. This Mohammad declined: 'Keep thy wife to thyself,' he said, 'and fear God.' But Zeid saw probably that the admonition proceeded from unwilling lips, and that the Prophet had still a longing eye for Zeinab. Perhaps he did not care to keep her, when he found that she desired to leave him, and was ambitious of the new and distinguished alliance. And so he formally divorced her. Mohammad still hesitated. There might be little scandal according to Arab morals in seeking the hand of a married woman whose husband had no wish to keep her; but **the husband in the present case was Mohammad's adopted son**, and even in Arabia such a union was unlawful. The flame, however, would not be stifled; and so, casting his scruples to the winds he resolved at last to have her.⁴⁴¹

Before commenting on the observations of Mr. Muir it may be useful to bring on record that William Muir had been a Christian missionary serving as a colonial administrator in British India. He joined Bengal civil service in 1837. He had been incharge of the intelligence department during the so-called mutiny i.e. Indian war for independence. Muir was knighted KCSI in 1868 after which he became leutenant governor of North-Western Provinces. It was his Christian background and affiliation with imperialism that made him. emit more and more poison against Islam and the Prophet ﷺ. He, therefore, did everything to deny the Divine

virgins for his festivity. More or less sex with lawfully married wives, however, has nothing scornful in it.

⁴⁴¹ William Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, (Edinburgh: J. Grant, reprint of 1923 ed.), p. 290-291.

appointment of Muhammad ﷺ as final prophet of the Lord. About him, it has been observed that:

Muir wanted to convince Muslims that Muhammad was not worth their allegiance. He thus combined scholarly and evangelical or missionary purposes.⁴⁴²

Muir propagated that Muhammad may have been affected by a **satanic influence**. Clinton Bennett says that Muir “chose to resurrect another old Christian theory” quotes the following passage from Muir’s 1858 *Life*, Vol. 2:

It is incumbent upon us to consider this question from a **Christian point of view**, and to ask whether the supernatural influence, which ... acted upon the soul of the Arabian prophet may not have proceeded from **the Evil One** ... Our belief in the power of the Evil One must lead us to consider this as at least one of the possible causes of the **fall of Mahomet... into the meshes of deception** ... May we conceive that a diabolical influence and inspiration was permitted to enslave the heart of him who had **deliberately yielded to the compromise with evil**.⁴⁴³

All the observations of William Muir about Islam, the Qur'an and the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, reflect the utterly biased views of a Christian missionary and a civil servant especially commissioned to rule over their subjects in the British India. Such officers had observed the Muslim population leading even Hindus and others to overthrow and expel the foreign occupying forces from India. We could, therefore, expect nothing better than this from Mr. Muir. Only people like him could conceive of the Prophet’s weakness for sex increasing with age. While doing so he had no scruples to evaluate the events in their historical background nor could he utilize his common sense to assess the impact of back breaking duties and responsibilities of the promised prophet of the Lord during old age and the busiest phase of his life. Had Mr. Muir

⁴⁴² Bennett, Clinton (1998) *In search of Muhammad*. Continuum International Publishing Group p. 111.

⁴⁴³ Bennett 1998, p. 113 citing Muir’s 1858 *Life*, vol. 2, p. 90f.

taken account of the extreme scarcity of the eatables and the clothings available to the Muslim society including the family of the Prophet ﷺ, the extreme hazards of life and pressures of multifarious duties on him it would not have been possible for him to imagine of leisure hours that the Prophet ﷺ cold spare for sex.

Only the enemies of the Lord God can think of accusing the Prophet ﷺ with '*weakness for sex growing with age*'. Sane people, however, think of growing responsibilities, multipharious involvements and rectitude of the Prophets with the advancement of their age. Only the infidels had been trying to find faults with the prophets.

As against Muir, the impartial observers throughout the world have eulogized the work and conduct of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the best manner they could e.g. here is a short passage from P. D. Cummins writing on Muhammad reproduced from "*100 Great Kings and Queens*" ed. by John Canning (Middlesex: Odham's Books, 1967), p. 185. He observes that:

Honest, truthful, reliable, Mohammed was well-liked in Mecca; although not much of a talker, he had a pleasant manner, a ready laugh and an attractive smile. **He was considered an oddity, however, for his kindness to animals and his complete lack of interest in women.**

Sagacious people can themselves realize that there could be no possibility of increasing **weakness for the sex growing with age** especially with deficiency of food and drinks at the time the gigantic responsibilities of the Prophet ﷺ were increasing day by day. Remembrance of Qur'an and teaching it to others required at least three to four hours a day. Its interpretation and exposition further taxed the time of the Prophet ﷺ. At no time at Medina could he ignore the prime responsibilities of defending his community against the enemies, preaching faith in the world, arranging expeditions for expansion of Islam, establishment of justice, welfare of the society and hundreds of other assignments that left him hardly with anytime for a nap during day or night. It is, therefore, ridiculous to assume of increasing sex with age about an empty-stomach person having thousands of responsibilities on him. He was the man who had been known as Sadiq and

Ameen even from his youth and during all other times thereafter. It was to prevent him from his missionary preachings that the Quraish had offered to choose him as their king, to give him huge wealth or the most beautiful woman for marriage but he had declined every temptation only to fulfill his assignment. Towards his oldage, therefore, no such inducements could distract him from the straight path. Instead of the baseless assumption of increasing sex with age, therefore, it will be more sensible to search for the genuine reasons compelling the Prophet ﷺ to augment the so-called Harem entirely with the Helpless divorcees and widows with 2, 3, 4 or 11 orphans with them. We also take strong exception to the remarks of William Muir that the Prophet's "*weakness for sex seemed to but grow with age*". Such remarks do not conform to the realities of life. No unusual increase in sex could be imagined without some invigorating drugs, abundance of eatables and leisure hours to enjoy. No increase in sex can, therefore, be imagined in presence of the utter deficiency of such provisions. Besides this, the increasing sex also reflects itself in revival of the fertility and virility of the person concerned. All such visions stand falsified by the fact that with the exception of the birth of Sayyidina Abraham from Mariya the Copt, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had no issue from any of his wives. We, therefore, find nothing substantial in the accusation of increasing sex with age. Sayyida Khadijah had been widowed twice. She was 40 years old having 3 children from her former husbands. Sayyida Umm-e-Habiba was a widow of 36-37 years having two children. Sawdah bint Zamaa was a widow 55 years having four orphans with her. Sayyida Umm-e-Salama was a widow aged 26-27 years having four orphans with her. Sayyida Zainab bint Khuzaima had firstly been married to Tufail b. Harith b. Abdul Muttalib who had divorced her. She was then married by Ubaida b. Harith the brother of Tufail. She had 10 children from Ubaida when he stood martyred fighting duel against Shaybah b. Rabbeeah during the battle of Badr. Zainab was then married by Abdullah b. Jahsh from whom she bore Muhammad son of Abdullah. Abdullah too was martyred due to severe injuries during the Battle of Uhud. As such, Sayyida Zainab daughter of

Khuzaima had been the ex-wife of three first cousins of the Holy Prophet ﷺ having born 11 children before her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As such the falsity of the accusations of William Muir such as '**having a desire for new and varied charms**' or '**weakness for sex growing with age**' stand rebutted especially keeping in view the fact that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not marry any other virgin except Sayyida Aishah. His marriage with Aisha, Hafsa, Umm-e-Habibah, Juwayriah bint Harith, Safiyah bint Huyay and Maimunah bint Harith had also been motivated by political considerations. Besides other considerations, marriage with Sawdah bint Zamaa had the purpose of providing shelter to the orphans and widow of a great martyr. Sayyida Zainab bint Khuzaima and Umm-e-Salama were the widows of the first cousins of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Besides being a great devotee to Islam Sayyida Zainab bint Jahsh, too, had been the first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is, therefore, obvious from the above that instead of any weakness for sex or having desire for new and varied charms, the marriages had been prompted by moral and political considerations.

Reverting to the observations of Muir about Zainab, we may point out that she had been 20 years younger than the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Right from her infancy, her first marriage and from her widowhood to her marriage with Zaid, she always lived under the eye of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It was 18 or 19 years after first marriage that she became a widow with the death of her husband. She had no children from him. Subsequently, she suffered from widowhood for about 4 years when the Holy Prophet ﷺ married her to Zaid his ex-slave and adopted son. Even after living for more than a year with Zaid, she had no children from him. By that time, Zainab had grown to 40 years and already had spent about 23 to 24 years of her married life. The entire family including Zainab had been among the earliest converts to Islam. The Prophet ﷺ must have been visiting them frequently. Hence, in spite of being fair to look upon, Zainab the short-statured infertile cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ could hardly have smitten the sight of the person who had been constantly watching her growth during each phase of her life. The fable of her sudden exposure, therefore, has no sense in it. In spite of all this, we can neither convince the hardened Christian

missionaries nor can prevent them from indulging into scandalizing the Prophet of Islam. The believers had, however, been guided by the Almighty that:

12. Why did not the believers - men and women - when ye heard of the affair,- put the best construction on it In their own minds and say, "This (charge) is an obvious lie" ? **13.** Why did they not bring four witnesses to prove it? When They have not brought the witnesses, such men, In the sight of Allah, (stand forth) themselves As liars! **14.** Were it not for the Grace and Mercy of Allah on you, In This world and the Hereafter, a grievous penalty would have seized you In that ye rushed glibly into this affair. **15.** Behold, ye received it on your tongues, and said out of your mouths things of which ye had no knowledge; and ye thought it to be a light matter, while it was Most serious In the sight of Allah. **16.** And why did ye not, when ye heard it, say? - "It is not right of us to speak of this: glory to Allah. This is a most serious slander!" **17.** Allah doth admonish you, that ye may never repeat such (conduct), if ye are (true) believers.⁴⁴⁴

The guidance as above had no impact on people like Muir or the British author and television presenter Barnaby Rogerson (b. 1960) who writes that:

AD 626 was also the year Muhammad took his fifth wife. **Unwittingly entering**⁴⁴⁵ the house of Zayd, his adopted son,

⁴⁴⁴ Al-Qur'an 24:12-17 Yousuf Ali.

⁴⁴⁵ Mr. Rogerson has misrepresented the facts by observing that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had entered the house of Zaid. Let him produce evidence for the same. It is also worth noting here that even earlier to the revelation in Sura al-Noor (quoted below) the Arabian community and especially the Muslims had no habit of "unwittingly" entering the houses of others without seeking their permission. Subsequently, it was made mandatory on them through the revelation that: "*O ye who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked permission and saluted those In them: that is best for you, In order that ye may heed (what is seemly). if ye find no one In the house, enter not until permission is given to you: if ye are asked to go back, go back: that makes for greater purity for yourselves: and Allah knows well all that ye do*" (Al-Qur'an 24:27-28). It is entirely incorrect, therefore, to allege that the Prophet ﷺ had entered the House of Zaid in his absence.

one day the Prophet saw for himself the beauty of his forty-year-old daughter-in-law, Zaynab.⁴⁴⁶ As he hurried from the house Muhammad was heard to murmur, '**Glory be to Him who disposeth of men's hearts!**'⁴⁴⁷ Zayd Soon divined that **Muhammad had become entranced by Zaynab's beauty**⁴⁴⁸ and at once offered to divorce his wife. They had not been getting on well but in truth Zayd would do anything to please his adopted father whom he revered above all else on earth. The prospect obviously interested Muhammad, though he refused again when Zayd repeated the offer. The Prophet was **known to disapprove of divorce.**⁴⁴⁹ There was an additional problem – **Zaynab was Muhammad's daughter-in-law and therefore could not**

No other instance of the nature can be found in the entire life of the Prophet ﷺ.

⁴⁴⁶ From the very childhood of Zainab, the Prophet ﷺ had been visiting her family frequently. This, therefore, leaves no room for the assumed eventuality that "**one day the Prophet saw for himself the beauty of his forty-years-old daughter in law, Zainab**". It was only to pervert the facts that Mr. Rogerson did not refer to Zainab through her biological relation with the Prophet ﷺ. Hence, instead of introducing Zainab as first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Mr. Rogerson highlighted her merely as the daughter-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ. **As such he willfully gave preference to adoptive relation over the blood relations that had not been acknowledged either in the Law of Moses (عليه السلام) or the Christian law.** The Qur'an, therefore, abrogated the Arabian traditions by restoring the Law of the Lord to last forever (Al-Qur'an 33:4-5, 40).

⁴⁴⁷ Actually the Prophet had married Zainab his first cousin to Zaid only to reform the traditions of Jahiliyyah. The Holy Prophet's observation that "**Glory be to Allah who disposeth of the hearts**" was a prayer that the Lord may mould the hearts of the couple in the manner to make the reform successfull.

⁴⁴⁸ Only the perverted minds like that of Rogerson can conceive of the entrancement of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by the beauty of Zainab whom he had been seeing continually from early childhood to the time of the alleged visit of the Prophet ﷺ to her house. The fanciful story must, therefore, be taken as entirely malicious.

⁴⁴⁹ Although the Law of Moses (عليه السلام) had categorically allowed the divorce (Deu 24:1-4) yet the new Testament contained strict prohibition of the same as attributed to Jesus Christ himself (Mat 19:9). In spite of the fact that the Qur'an had allowed the divorce, the Prophet ﷺ had declared it abominable as quoted below: "**Narrated Muharib: The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Allah did not make anything lawful more abominable to Him than divorce**". Due care and caution had, therefore, to be excercised before divorcing a woman. In view of this, it was natural for the Prophet ﷺ to avoid divorce as long as possible.

lawfully be married to him.⁴⁵⁰ At this period the four-wife rule that had been established for all Muslims also applied to Muhammad.

It was then that a revelation came upon Muhammad that swept away all obstacles. Surah Al-Ahzab of the Qur'an **awarded the Prophet sexual carte blanche:**⁴⁵¹ 'We have made lawful to you ... women who give themselves to you and whom you wished to take in marriage. **This privilege is yours alone, being granted to no other believer**⁴⁵² ... You

⁴⁵⁰ We have already stated that Islam aimed at reforming the inheritance law by restoring the natural or blood relations and by abrogating the traditions of adoption. It was to establish the parity of social status among different classes of the society that Zaid his ex-slave and adopted son had been married to Zainab the first cousin of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. This aimed to reform the traditions of Jahiliyyah that made no distinction between the blood relations and those created by the words of mouth. **Neither Zaid had been the real son of the Prophet ﷺ nor Zainab his real daughter-in-law.** By her blood relations, she had been a cousin of the Prophet ﷺ eligible to marry him as per Law of the Lord.

⁴⁵¹ **Carte Blanche i.e. complete freedom to act:** It must be noted here that all the succeeding prophets were obliged to follow the traditions of the preceding prophets as long as they did not receive fresh commandments from the LORD. The Bible had placed no embargo on the number of wives of the prophets. King David had 9 wives and many concubines. Similarly, Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines (1Ki 11:3). Their successors being kings also had large numbers of wives as well as concubines. As such the Carte Blanche was already there and it was not through Surah Al-Ahzab that the Prophet ﷺ received the same. It is pertinent to note here that instead of giving any further relaxation to the believers, Islam had actually curtailed it by forbidding the believers to have more than four wives at a time.

⁴⁵² Most of the Prophets of the Lord had been enjoying certain privileges not allowed to others. It was the Lord who taught Noah to construct the Ark (Gen 6:14). He continued to give him many other instructions as recorded in the chapters 6-9 of Genesis. The Lord intervened twice to save Sarah from the Pharaoh and also from King Abimelech of Gerar (Gen 12:17 & 20:2-3). Similarly, the Lord gave glad tidings to Abraham for a son when he was 99 years of age (Al-Qur'an 11:71). After the death of Sarah at the age of 127 years (Gen 23:1) Abraham married another wife whose name was Ketura and she bore him 6 sons (Gen 25:1-2). These sons must have been born after Abraham had attained the age of 137 years (Gen 25:1-2). To keep Abraham sexually fit and fertile till very late age was, therefore, a special favor for him. Only Moses had been exempted from the law of life for life when he killed an Egyptian and fled to

may put off any of your wives you please and take to bed any of them you please' (no.33, verse 50). The same revelation instructs that the Prophet's wives be addressed by believers from behind a curtain, that **no one shall 'wed his wives after him'**, that they should 'draw their veils close around them'. It also specifically changed the rules of adoption and declared of Zayd's wife Zaynab that **'We have married her to thee.'** This chapter of the Qur'an can be interpreted as

Midian. Again only he had the privilege to see the fire in the bush and to wield the walking staff with which he wrought numerous miracles. He used to put his hand into his bosom and when he pulled it out it had a dazzling light. Besides many other miracles, the entire chapter 14 of the exodus contains step by step instructions of the Lord to save Israelites and to drown the Egyptians in the sea. God's instructions that **"And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him"** (Exo 24:2 KJV). Similarly, Mary had been the only woman whom the Lord had been providing the fruits and other eatables in her chamber (Al-Qur'an 3:37). Jesus had been the only person born miraculously who could talk to the people while in his cradle (Al-Qur'an 19:28-31). This too was a special favor of the Lord to absolve Jesus from illegitimacy as propagated by the Jews. Similarly, the prayer of Tahajjud had been made mandatory only for the Holy Prophet ﷺ which had not been binding on any of his followers. It was for four years i.e. from year 55 to 59 of his life that the Holy Prophet ﷺ enjoyed the privilege to marry more women either to provide protection to them and their children or to strengthen the Muslim community by establishing political ties with the families or tribes around him. In doing so, **he had neither deviated from the traditions of the prophets preceding him nor did he infringe the law revealed till then.** Some of these marriages had also been helpful in rapid preaching and expansion of Islam. The objections of the critics, therefore, reflect nothing but their hatred against Islam.

We also find that David had been the most prominent prophet and prototype of Messiah, son of God and the man after God's heart (1Sa 13:14 & Acts 13:22 KJV) who married at least 9 wives besides having indefinite number of concubines. Similarly, Solomon his son had married 700 wives and 300 concubines. There had been many others mentioned as heroes of the Israelites who had 18 or more wives but neither the Jews nor the Christians raise any objection against them nor do they find any sensuousness in them. It is only Prophet Muhammad ﷺ who had been the special target of their allegations in spite of the fact that **"the Talmudists formulate the rule that no Jew may have more than four wives; kings may have at the most eighteen"**. (Encyclopedia Biblica, Vol. III, s.v. 'Marriage' p. 2946). Kings, therefore, enjoyed the privilege not allowed to others.

showing the **intimate concern of God for his Prophet**⁴⁵³ and how the day-to-day dilemmas of early Islam allowed for the creation of practical rules of future ethical behaviour. But to **modern Western eyes** this incident is often the point at **which their personal sympathy with the Prophet falters**.⁴⁵⁴ It is as if finally, Muhammad's egalitarianism found its limits, as **he allowed himself a dispensation not offered to all the other believers**. In every other detail of his life he retained the habits and generous nobility of the poor and could truly assert that 'humility is my pride'. **Women were his one great pleasure as a man**.⁴⁵⁵

Let us admit here that about 1400 years ago the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not take notice of the modern Western Eyes i.e. the present age of the Western critics. Instead of providing for the '*Modern Western Eyes*' he had been concerned primarily to revive and rehearse the essentials of faith and conduct that the Lord had been revealing to the Prophets before him. The critics should have the sense to compare his faith and conduct with the revelations of the Lord and the life and conduct of the Prophets ﷺ. He was by no means obliged to follow the modern Western Eyes fixed on vulgarity and animal instincts. The Prophet ﷺ of Islam, therefore, must be at variance with the atheists, the secularists and the gay people of the modern times. The guidance from the Lord can be useful only for those who fear him (Al-Qur'an 2:2-3). The Lord also revealed that:

⁴⁵³ Barnaby Rogerson perhaps was unaware of the fact that **the Lord always had been having intimate concern for each and every prophet sent by Him**. In this respect, there was nothing special in the commandments given to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Let people like Rogerson know that no prophet of the Lord can invent anything false in the revelations of the Lord. The Lord had said that:

44. And if the messenger were to invent any sayings in Our name, **45.** We should certainly seize him by his right hand, **46.** And We should certainly then cut off the artery of his heart: **47.** Nor could any of you withhold him (from Our wrath). (Al-Qur'an 69:44-47 Yousuf Ali).

⁴⁵⁴ Mr. Rogerson could not have been unaware of the fact that that the Christians always served as antagonists of Islam. Hence, the modern or the Old Western eyes never had any personal sympathy with the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

⁴⁵⁵ Barnaby Rogerson, *The Prophet Muhammad*, (London: Abacus, Time Warner Book Group, 2003), p. 161.

17/9 Lo! this Qur'an guideth unto that which is straightest, and giveth tidings unto the believers who do good works that theirs will be a great reward. 17/10 And that those who believe not in the Hereafter, for them We have prepared a painful doom.⁴⁵⁶

Many of the Jewish and Christian writers have utilized their expertise to ridicule or deride the prophet of Islam by changing a feather into a flock or by developing a hint into a novel extending over a thousand pages or more. Since the thinking of each person depends on his own bent of mind, we find it useless to argue with them. It is only for the seekers of truth that we endeavor to bring the facts on record.

Zaynab continued to suffer from neglect and dismay during her widowhood for about four years. This could be the best occasion for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry her if he desired to do so. Instead of marrying her himself, the holy Prophet ﷺ married Zaynab to Zaid to abrogate the tradition of Jahiliyyah that had forbidden free men or women from marrying a slave or an ex-slave. She had married Zaid only to surrender herself before the will of the Lord. Consequently her divorce from an ex-slave had caused her deprivation and disgrace because the Arabian society did not approve of a marriage between a free man and the divorcee or widow of a slave or ex-slave. Besides introduction of many other reforms, therefore, it was to console her and to reward her abundantly that the Almighty directed the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry her.

Critics have no notion of the fact that ever since Hijrah, the entire Muslim community had been suffering from insufficiency of food and clothing. Zaid too had no means to provide better diet or clothes to Zainab. In the circumstances, **we wonder how the Jewish or the Christian critics could envision an impoverished and hunger-struck barren woman of 40 years to transform herself suddenly into some Madam Recamier or Elizebeth Taylor exposing her curves and contours in a sleeping dress to enchant the Prophet ﷺ of Islam.** Such critics lacked the knowledge that the Muslim society at Medina during those times had no means to afford different dresses for the night or day. It was

⁴⁵⁶ Al-Qur'an 17:9-10.

especially unthinkable for Zainab who had not been living happily with Zaid. Besides this the Muslim women usually had to wear their full wrapping garments to offer their mandatory prayers about an hour before the sunrise. There as such could be no possibility for a practicing woman like Zainab to be seen in the night dress during the daytime as visualized by the Western critics or the orientalist.

The critics also fail to tell us from where the woman who hardly could afford a shroud to cover her body could manage a nightgown to make herself exceedingly attractive for the Prophet ﷺ whom she was not expecting to visit them. She might have been a beautiful woman like many other women of the Quraysh family but keeping in view her short stature, the age and adversities faced by her, she could have nothing special in her to entrance the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to the extent that he could think of snatching her from Zaid his beloved one. The romantic fabrication of the critics, therefore, does not have an iota of truth in it.

“Glory be To Him who Disposeth of Men’s Hearts”

It is said that while returning from the house of Zaid, Zainab heard the Holy Prophet ﷺ murmuring:
سبحان الله العظيم، سبحان الله مصرف القلوب

Glory be to Allah the Supreme, Glory be to Him who disposeth of men’s hearts.

The Christian Critics like the British orientalist Barnaby Rogerson intentionally misinterpreted the Holy Prophet’s words recorded above to depict his utter fascination or enchantment due to sudden exposure of the extra ordinary beauty of Zainab. It was the perverted mind of Barnaby Rogerson that added additional colors to the fiction by suggesting that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had entered the house of Zaid. Besides this, he also interpreted the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in such manner that conflict with the background of the reform the Prophet ﷺ had

introduced by marrying Zainab with Zaid. Instead of appreciating the true purpose behind the reform Barnaby Rogerson perverted the facts to publicise the falsity that Muhammad had fallen in love with Zainab seeing her suddenly during his visit to her house. It is an utter absurdity, therefore, to imagine of a hunger-stricken, short statured, sterile woman of 40 years to appear suddenly as a striking beauty in the night dress to fascinate the Holy Prophet ﷺ who already had wives much younger and more beautiful than Zainab. Sayyida Aishah aged between 12 to 19 years far excelled other women of her age in each and every respect. Similarly, Hafsa aged about 21 years and Umm-e-Salama of about 27-30 years old were much younger in age than Zainab and perhaps more beautiful than her. The fiction of the enchantment of the Prophet ﷺ spun around the invention of the heretics and the non-believers, therefore, has no substance in it.

Had Zainab been a stunning beauty as projected by the western critics, there was no likelihood for her to stay as a widow for about four years. The historians also do not report of any proposals of marriage received by her during the time of her widowhood. Although she might have aspired to marry the Holy Prophet ﷺ but instead of showing any interest in her, the Holy Prophet ﷺ married her to Zaid to annul the traditions of Jahiliyyah which had forbidden marriage between a free man or woman and a slave or an ex-slave. Subsequently, it was to implement the reforms enumerated by us earlier that the Holy prophet ﷺ married her. The true background of the events lends no support to the accusations of the adversaries of Islam.

Zaid had been married to Umm-e-Aiman the Abyssinian slave of Abdullah the Father of the Prophet ﷺ. She had been about 30 years senior in age than Zaid but gave birth to Zaid's son Usama. The couple continued to live amicably till the martyrdom of Zaid in the Battle of Mauta in 8 AH. Zaid and Umm-e-Aiman had been living peacefully from 7 BH to 8 AH whereas Zainab and Zaid had strained relations from the very beginning of their marriage. Since both the marriages (Zaid's Marriage with Umm-e-Aiman and Zainab) had been arranged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, the cordial relations in one and the tension-ridden in the other were astonishing for him. On seeing Zainab, therefore, it was natural for him to exclaim that "*Glory be to Allah the*

Supreme, Glory be to Him who disposeth of men's hearts". This was so because the Almighty had joined the heart of Zaid with the old Abyssinian lady but the same Zaid was finding it difficult to live in peace with a younger and more beautiful Lady from the Quraish family married to him by the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself to introduce a great reform in the Law of Jahiliyyah. In utter surprise, therefore, the Holy Prophet ﷺ expressed that "*Glory be to Him who disposeth of men's hearts*". His words can, therefore, be taken as a wish as well as a prayer that the Lord may mould the hearts of Zaid and Zainab in such manner that they may live together in peace. By no stretch of mind can we, therefore, think of any fascination of the Prophet ﷺ or his desire to marry Zainab. Had it been so, he had the golden opportunity to marry her any time during the period of her widowhood. After her divorce from Zaid, however, it was under entirely different considerations and also to implement other marital reforms that the Almighty revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to marry her.

Criticism of John J. Pool

Mr. John J. Pool is another critic to be dealt with in the following. He says:

Another wrong also under which women suffer in Mohammedan countries is that of early marriage. It is true that in Eastern lands girls become women sooner than in Western lands; but, all the same, the age of ten or even under is altogether too early to commence the duties, responsibilities, and trials of married life. **In this matter Mohammed himself set a very bad example.** His third wife, whose name was Ayesha, was a mere child of seven years when the Prophet espoused her, and **she was only nine when he married her, and took her away from her father's house.** It is said that the little girl had her playthings in her hands when the Prophet called for her; and doubtless she carried them with her to her new home.⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵⁷ John J. Pool, *Studies in Muhammedanism* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Company, 1892), p. 31.

Mr. John J. Pool had been extremely wrong to single out women in the Islamic countries suffering from early marriages. Although we cannot deny the existence of such a practice among certain backward countries of the world including Africa, the Indian sub-continent or its vicinities, yet there had never been any widespread practice of child marriage among the Muslims anywhere in the world. Occasionally some poverty stricken parents in the poor and backward countries used to sell or marry their under-aged daughters to meet their financial needs. Such examples, however, could hardly be traced among the Muslims. Those who insist on the slander must prove it through statistical evidence for the same. In view of the above we find nothing credible in the biased observation of Mr. Pool against the Muslims.

As regards the consummation of the marriage of Aysha by the Holy Prophet ﷺ at the age of 9 years, it is based on unreliable reports publicized by dissenters from mainstream Islam from the end of the 2nd century to 3rd century AH. No one among the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or the five earliest generations of Muslims had any knowledge of alleged tender age of Sayyida Aishah at the time of the consummation of her marriage. Actually the marriage had been solemnized at such a mature age of Sayyida Aishah that the believers or the enemies of Islam found nothing objectionable in it. Had the marriage of Sayyida Aishah been consumed during her childhood the same could not have escaped bitter criticism of the Munafiqoon and the enemies of Islam. Total absence of such criticism during earliest three centuries of Islam, therefore, shows that there had been no such incidence at all. This can be taken as a conclusive proof of the fakeness of the extremely belated report from a single source about which we find no other evidence during the first two centuries of Islam. As regards the reports about taking playthings with her the same are mere fabrications to undermine the authority and nobility of the most virtuous, scholarly and sagacious authority on the interpretation of the Qur'an, Jurisprudence of Islam and one of the reporters of the largest number of Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Obviously, such reports are handiworks of the critics of Sayyida Aishah who continued to reapply the reports pertaining to four or five Nabvi to the married life of Sayyida Aishah from Shawwal 1 AH to Rabi-ul-Awwal 11 AH.

Sensuality

The Munafiqoon and the enemies of Islam had been fabricating various false accusations to obscure the luminous character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They, therefore, tried to present him as an extremely sensuous person. According to them, the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to have sex with each of his wives during every night which is entirely baseless. Many of them misinterpret the Hadith quoted below:

Narrated Qatada: Anas bin Malik said, "The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night and they were eleven in number." I asked Anas, "Had the Prophet the strength for it?" Anas replied, "**We used to say that the Prophet was given the strength of thirty (men).**" And Sa'id said on the authority of Qatada that Anas had told him about nine wives only (not eleven).⁴⁵⁸

In this respect we note that only the first sentence in the Hadith i.e. "*The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night*" is a statement of fact. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, however, never had more than 9 wives at a time. As regards the sentence "*We used to say that the Prophet was given the strength of thirty (men)*" the same reportedly was the misconception of certain companions of the Prophet ﷺ which could neither be taken as the word of the Prophet ﷺ or the matter of reality. It is, however, correct that the Holy Prophet ﷺ normally used to visit each of his wives once during 24 hours to know about their welfare. Since he had to visit all of his wives, he could spare only a few minutes for each of them. As regards having sex with them, the Holy Prophet ﷺ fixed the turn of his wives and used to stay in the particular house till the morning prayers. Entering the house quite late after the Isha prayers, he used to reserve about half of his time for optional prayers and **Tahajjud which was mandatory only for him**. He, therefore, could neither afford any extra

⁴⁵⁸ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 1, Book 5, Number 268:

sex nor had he the sexual vigour for the same. Even otherwise keeping in view the insufficiency of food, milk, eatables or energizers, one cannot assume any abnormal sex in an aged man in his late fifties especially when he had been extremely busy and used to return home late in the evening after attending to back-breaking responsibilities throughout the day. Even the Qur'an bears witness to the fact that Holy Prophet ﷺ had been devoting most of his time to worship the Lord. To relieve him from the unbearable burden the Lord revealed that:

1. O Thou folded In garments! **2.** stand (to prayer) by night, but not all night,- **3.** half of it,- or a Little less, **4.** or a Little more; and Recite the Qur'an In slow, measured rhythmic tones. **5.** soon shall we send down to Thee a weighty Message. **6.** truly the rising by night is Most potent for governing (the soul), and Most suitable for (framing) the word (of prayer and Praise). **7.** True, there is for Thee by Day prolonged occupation with ordinary duties:⁴⁵⁹

It is worth noting here that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had advised all his followers (male as well as females) to take a bath after every intercourse with their spouses. In case one could not afford to do so he or she was obliged to wash private parts and make ablution (*wudu*) before having another intercourse. It was, however, mandatory for unclean people to obtain cleanliness through bath before their morning or other prayers. The scarcity of water and time, therefore, imposed a checked on frequent intercourses of the believers with their wives during any day or night.

The antagonists of Islam forget the huge burden of duties which made the Holy Prophet ﷺ the busiest man on Earth. Had he been sensuous as propagated by his enemies, it would have been impossible for him to pursue his goals of calling the idolators to the worship of one and the only Lord God of the Universe and to turn out extremely successful in his mission. Besides routine preachings, he had to lead five mandatory prayers everyday usually at Masjid-e-Nabvi at the times fixed for the same by the Almighty. In addition to the above he also had to lead funeral prayers of the deceased. Attending to

⁴⁵⁹ Al-Qur'an 73:1-7 Yousuf Ali.

the envoys from various parts of Arabia, Persia and Syria etc. everyday took lot of his time. Thousands of persons had been visiting Medina to embrace Islam at the hand of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He also had to teach Qur'an and explain different traditions of Islam to his followers. The Prophet ﷺ served as the chief justice in the Muslim Society to decide all the conflicts arising among the community. The Holy Prophet had to select the leaders and the members of various teams to be sent to preach in far-away lands. It too was a time consuming job for him. Being encircled by the enemies all around Medina, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had to look after matters relating to defense. He himself led about 27 battles or expeditions during 2 AH to 9 AH. Moreover, he managed to send about 73 expeditions under the command of suitable persons among his followers. Some of these expeditions covered a period of several months while a few out of the same came to an end within one or two weeks. There were numerous other assignments which kept the Holy Prophet ﷺ busy from the morning prayers to about 10 pm in the evening. During the day, however, he could afford an hour or so for a nap after his meals if any. It is, therefore, evident from the above that an aged man living in extreme austerity with multifarious duties during the day and standing in prayer for hours together during the night could hardly afford sufficient time for sex or other enjoyments in life.

Although the Jews as well as the Christian scholars have been making hectic efforts to spread disinformation about the Holy Prophet ﷺ from the 7th century AD yet no human efforts can conceal the truth forever. In spite of being a critic and antagonist of Islam, Mr. Stanley Lane Poole reports about the family life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that:

He lived with his wives in a row of humble cottages, separated from one another by palm-branches, cemented together with mud. He would kindle the fire, sweep the floor, and milk the goats himself. 'A'isheh tells us that he slept upon a leathern mat, and that he mended his clothes, and even clouted his shoes, with his own hand. **For months together ... he did not get a sufficient meal. The little food that he had was**

always shared with those who dropped in to partake of it. Indeed, outside the Prophet's house was a bench or gallery, on which were always to be found a number of the poor, who lived entirely on his generosity, and were hence called the "people of the bench." His ordinary food was dates and water or barley bread; milk and honey were luxuries of which he was fond, but which he rarely allowed himself. The fare of the desert seemed most congenial to him, even when he was sovereign of Arabia.⁴⁶⁰

As such, those who ponder the lifestyle, the oppressing duties of the Prophet ﷺ and the way of living at home of the promised Prophet of the Lord ﷺ can hardly imagine fanciful luxuries or sexual engagements without entirely ignoring the mission for which he was sent. His unparalleled success as a teacher, a guide, a general of the Army and a man of God, therefore, endures as a proof of his rectitude in all aspects of life. Besides this, **no over-burdened man with empty stomach and lack of all luxuries whatsoever can afford sex with several women during any day or night.** About his life at home it has been said that:

A'isheh reported that when Allah's Messenger occupied himself in prayer, he observed such a (long) qiyam (posture of standing in prayer) that his feet were swollen. A'isheh said: Allah's Messenger you do this (in spite of the fact) that your earlier and later sins have been pardoned for you? Thereupon, he said. A'isheh, should I not prove myself to be a thanks-giving servant (of Allah)?⁴⁶¹

God-fearing and extremely busy people can hardly spare any time for sensuousness and other pleasures of life especially in their old age. We, therefore, quote some of the Ahadith describing the overall destitution of the Muslim community. It has been reported that:

'A'isheh used to say to 'Urwa: Son of my sister, by Allah, I used to see the new moon, then the new moon, then the new moon, i.e. three moons in two months, and fire was not kindled in the house of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon

⁴⁶⁰ Edward William Lane, *Selections from the Qur'an*, p. xlii, (Introduction).

⁴⁶¹ *Sahih Muslim*, Chapter 16, Book 39, Hadith Number 6774.

him).I ('Urwa) said: Auntie, then what were your means of sustenance? She said: Dates and water. But it (so happened) that Allah's Messenger had some Ansar as his neighbours and they had milk animals and they used to send to Allah's Messenger some milk of their (animals) and he served that to us.⁴⁶²

'A'isheh reported that Allah's Messenger had died in a state that they could afford to eat two things only: **water and dates**.⁴⁶³

Aisha reported: The family of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, never ate to their fill of wheat bread for three consecutive nights, ever since they had come to Medina, until he passed away.⁴⁶⁴

Narrated Anas: No doubt, the Prophet mortgaged his armor for barley grams. Once I took barley bread with some dissolved fat on it to the Prophet and I heard him saying, "The household of Muhammad did not possess except a Sa (of food grain, barley, etc.) for both the morning and the evening meals although they were nine houses."⁴⁶⁵

Narrated Abu Huraira: that he passed by a group of people in front of whom there was a roasted sheep. They invited him but he refused to eat and said, "Allah's Apostle left this world without satisfying his hunger even with barley bread."⁴⁶⁶

Narrated Sad from his father: Once the meal of 'Abdur-Rahman bin 'Auf was brought in front of him, and he said, "Musab bin 'Umair was martyred and he was better than I, and he had nothing except his Burd (a black square narrow dress) to be shrouded in. Hamza or another person was martyred and he was also better than I and he had nothing to be shrouded in except his Burd. No doubt, I fear that the rewards of my deeds might have been given early in this world." Then he started weeping.⁴⁶⁷

The Islamic community had, therefore, been suffering from such poverty that could not afford enough shrouds to cover the dead bodies of their martyres. We, therefore, do not

⁴⁶² *Sahih Muslim*, Book 42, Chapter 1, Hadith Number 7092:

⁴⁶³ *Ibid*, Book 42, Chapter 1, Hadith Number 7095:

⁴⁶⁴ *Sahih Bukhari*, Hadith No. 6089.

⁴⁶⁵ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 3, Book 45, Number 685.

⁴⁶⁶ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 7, Book 65, Number 325:

⁴⁶⁷ *Sahih Bukhari*, Volume 2, Book 23, Number 364:

know the source for the critics to conceive of the night dress for Sayyida Zainab.

Being hard hit by poverty, starvation and insecurity at Makkah as well as Medina, the women used to lose their charms of youth in their late thirties. Zaynab at the age of 40 years was no exception to the circumstances mentioned above. The circumstantial evidence, therefore, lends no support to the fiction that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been smitten by the beauty of her cousin whom he had been seeing very often during the last forty years.

From the very beginning, Islam has been preaching the true word of God to its followers. Its progress, therefore, depended on preaching truth, moral excellence and reason in a polite manner. The Prophet ﷺ and his followers never based its promotion on scandalizing or denouncing the earlier prophets or saints and sages among nations before the Muslims. Finally it must be kept in mind that a legacy of a sensuous person cannot be different from his own characteristics. The immediate legacy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been his own companions and the rightly guided caliphs who had no match in piety and righteousness in the world. Although the Muslims had fought 100 battles or so during the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and many more thereafter yet the world always found them observing high moral standards. The long lasting impact of the moral teachings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had also been apparent even during the crusades during the crusades. There had been no report of rape or molestation of women by the Islamic armies even as a retaliation of the heinous crimes committed by the crusaders. As compared to this, the Jews as well as the Christians had always been behaving like wild beasts with the vanquished people irrespective of the fact that they were the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims or others. Their ruffian behavior persisted even during the World War One and Two. In the World War II, they raped millions of innocent Christian women of the defeated party. It is said that in East Prussia the Russian armies did not spare any woman from 8 to 80 years old. Similar had been the treatment meted out to women and children in Germany. The said conduct had been universal in its nature during all their conquests. Japan, Korea, and Vietnam are conspicuous examples of the same. For details please refer to our book *Slavery and*

Human Rights through the Ages, Vol. II, Ch. 10, s.v. *Human Miseries during the World Wars*.

Those who talk of the sensuality of the Holy Prophet ﷺ must keep in mind that he never had sex out of wed lock nor had there been any scandal of his illicit relations with any woman even during his youth. **Having more or less sex with one's own wives is no crime or immorality in any of the religions revealed by the Lord.** Anyhow, if the Jews or the Christians continue to publicise fanciful things about the Prophet promised by the Lord as an excuse to deny him, then they alone will have to suffer from the consequences of their disbelief and vilification. We have already explained the reasons for the multiple marriages of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and need not go into further details. It may, however, be reiterated here that besides many other considerations to marry more women, the Holy Prophet ﷺ also **intended to leave behind an academy of women who could serve as interpreters of the Qur'an, transmitters of the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ at home and to explain to men as well as women, the jurisprudence about cleanliness from menstruation and child birth etc.** No other prophet in the world had left behind such an Academy especially for women to continue transmission of his traditions and precepts of faith among them. Consequently, some of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ survived for about 54 years after his death and continued to guide men as well as women about problems relating to cleanliness, prayers and fasting etc. Ignoring the genuine considerations for marrying various divorced or widowed women partly with the purpose of providing asylum to them only the biased people can represent the sexual urge for multi-marriages of a great prophet in the old age.

The enemies of Islam never took the final and immutable message of the Lord seriously. Instead of trying to receive true guidance from the Qur'an, they tried to reject or ridicule it. They, therefore, denied Muhammad ﷺ in the manner the Jews had denied Jesus Christ. Hence, instead of receiving the promised Prophet ﷺ as a bearer of complete, correct and final message of the Lord for mankind, they made hectic efforts to present him as an

imposter, a play boy or a sex maniac obsessed with sensual pleasures in life. They, therefore, wrongly decry the Holy Prophet ﷺ for sensuousness knowing full well that Judaism and the preachings of Jesus Christ had imposed no restrictions on sex or marriages within lawful means. It was only with the Christians of third or fourth centuries AD that sex even within the lawful sphere had become a pollution or criminal act in the western Christendom under the influence of St. Paul and certain other so called apostles of Jesus Christ. It was perhaps under the influence of the unmarried lives of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ that they took it as the model of purity and piety in the world. They, however, forgot that both John and Jesus never had peace, settled lives nor means to support wives or families. We also observe that most of the prophets before John and Jesus had been marrying at the age of 40 years and living a normal life in the society with their wives and children. Unluckily, John had been assassinated and Jesus stood crucified before reaching that age. They, therefore, had no chance to live a married life like other prophets before them. John and Jesus never raised any objection against the marriage or polygamy during their lives. Being misled by the lives of certain celibates and mystics among them, the early Christian fathers preferred virginity over the married life in spite of the fact that there had been no prohibition on marriage in the OT or the Gospels. The earliest Christian fathers had themselves adopted the doctrine of marrying only one woman without any commandment from the Lord God or Jesus Christ. Later on even bigamy or polygamy used to be treated as a crime among them.

The Christians set aside the precepts of the Old Testament which contains more than forty examples of bigamy or polygamy in it. Centuries after the death of Jesus Christ, the Christian priests started elevating and emphasising the virginity of Mary by propagating virginity as a holier mode of living than the married life which they termed as polluted due to sex. In their eagerness to achieve spiritual ascendance by avoiding sex, they even rejected the very first commandments of the Lord in the Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:18. In spite of good intentions behind the prohibition of marriage of the priests, the man-made prohibitions conflicted with the nature of the human beings. The natural urge, therefore, destroyed the moral uprightness of most of

the clergy, numerous examples of which have been cited in the first volume of this book. Even today the Western Christendom hardly frowns at free sex or wild-oat-sowing by those who can afford to pay for the sex out of wed lock. Consequently, there are people who continue enjoying sex with hundreds of different women available in their society. Polygamy which had been a lawful source for thousands of years in the Bible is abhorred to the extreme even in the countries where women far exceed in numbers over men. Millions of such women are destined to live alone or to fall easy prey to the sexmongers. Some of such women adopt prostitution as a profession. It was to prevent such lawlessness that Islam stressed on marriage as compared to celibacy. Even the divorcees and widows up to the age of 60 years are exhorted to marry so that no women remain unprotected or destitute to be exploited by corrupt elements in the society.

The Christian missionaries and the orientalist spare no occasion to present a perverted picture of the Islamic injunctions and the person as well as traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by one way or the other. They propagate that 'there is something wrong about the system that thus makes a prison of a home.'⁴⁶⁸ The hypocrites and the non-believers tried to cast various types of aspersions on the Holy Prophet ﷺ for marrying 10 or 11 wives. Some of them try to show that the Prophet ﷺ had become extremely sensual during 55 to 59 years of his age. Their allegations are primarily based on certain stories concocted by the Munafiqoon and the non-believers in Islam. Instead of narrating such fake stories in their own name, such skeptics wrongfully attributed dubious reports to some companions of the Prophet well-known for their integrity and truthfulness. Subsequently, certain irresponsible historians or narrators of Ahadith recorded even some of the slanderous reports without verification of their origin or the trustworthiness of the reporters. On proper scrutiny, however, all such reports turn out to be false and derogatory against the luminous character of the Promised Prophet ﷺ of the Almighty. To dispel the allegations of

⁴⁶⁸ John J. Pool, *Studies in Muhammedanism*, p. 38.

sensuality, royal living, availability of comforts with abundance of leisure hours at the disposal of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as the chief of the Muslim community and the King of Arabia, we have recounted briefly the austere living and most strenuous responsibilities on him.

The spread of Islam had been uniquely successful. Within a hundred years since the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Islam had conquered the entire peninsula of Arabia, the great empire of the Persians, Afghanistan with most of the territories presently in Pakistan. Almost entire southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea which about two centuries earlier had been the strongholds of the Roman Empire covering Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Libya came under Islamic conquests. From the Eastern Roman Empire, the Muslims took over the possession of Egypt, Sinai Desert, the Holy Land, Syria, Mesopotamia and parts of Anatolia. In addition to the above, they had also conquered major parts of Hispania/Al-Andalus i.e. Portugal and Spain in Europe. Subsequently, it was during 1095 and 1300 AD that the entire Christian world rose up to reoccupy Jerusalem and other territories in the East from the Muslims.

Crusades (1096-1300 AD) had perhaps been the peak point of the Christian retaliation against Islam. Since then, the Qur'an and the personal life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had been the special target of the western scholars. Among the primary subjects are the treatment of women in the Islamic Law and polygamy representing sensuality of the promised messenger of the Lord and the Muslims.

After suffering from severe defeats during the crusades, the Christian powers ultimately turned away to explore other parts of the world. Meanwhile the Ottoman Turks conquered Anatolia, Thrace and Greece etc. which brought an end to the Roman Empire in the East. By conquering substantial parts of Hungarian and Austrian Empire during the seventeenth century AD, the Muslim Armies had gone up to Vienna, the capital of Austria from where they were repulsed by the collective armies of Euro-Christian world. With the conquest of Khanate of Crimea and Azerbaijan, the Muslims had become the masters of the Caspian Sea, Black Sea as well as Mediterranean Sea. Since all these territories had formerly been the subjects of the Christian Empire, therefore, the Christian West always took Islam, the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet ﷺ as their worst

enemies in the World. Their hatred for them was, therefore, evident from the writings of the Christian missionaries, historians, philosophers and poets in the literature of the West. No wonder that we find many novelists, story writers, journalists and the so called orientalists denouncing, the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the contents of the Qur'an under the cover of research in Islamic history and culture in the world.

ALLEGATIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY AND SENSUALITY

Toynbee's Allegation of Sovereignty against the Prophet ﷺ

The British Historian, philosopher of history and research professor Arnold Joseph Toynbee⁴⁶⁹ (1889-1975) authored his famous work '*A Study of History*' 1934-1961. Toynbee's observations about his self-assumed inverse change in the character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during the last phase of his life was in fact his biased observation to smear the luminous figure of the Holy Prophet ﷺ by concocting the Withdrawal-and-Return motif through which Toynbee tried to allege a 'spiritual bathos' by suggesting conversion of the

⁴⁶⁹ Incidentally, the present writer had a chance to attend two of his lectures at the University of Peshawar in Pakistan during 1960-1961. I, along with some other students of my department also had a question answer session with him. He no doubt left an impression of a great scholar which continued to occupy my mind till year 2001 when I happened to study his observations about the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Since then I take him just as a Christian missionary than a great scholar of history. To my dismay, I found him extremely obsessed with the Christian theology based on idealistic presentation of the **Jesus of faith** presented by the evangelists writing under the influence of the 14 Epistles of St. Paul. They being faithful subjects of Rome, enjoyed no liberty to present the **Jesus of history** who made earnest efforts to overthrow the Romans and to establish the kingdom of God to be ruled in accordance with the commandments of the Lord. Toynbee, obviously set aside his obligations as a historian to analyze the facts. As a Christian missionary, therefore, it was impossible for him to appreciate the true assignments of the prophets of the Lord and their contributions to improve the human fate throughout the world. It was natural for Toynbee, therefore, to disapprove the conquests made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his followers which brought an end to Christian/Roman domination in substantial parts of Asia, Africa and Europe. Avoiding detailed study of his work in the present context, however, we shall be commenting only on his observations maligning the luminous career of the Holy Prophet

prophetic career into that of a conquerer. To be a conquerer according to him implied withdrawal from the prophetic mission perhaps for enjoying worldly power prosperity, luxuries and respect. To him, therefore, it was something not befitting the position of a Prophet of the Lord. Look! how Toynbee contrived to uphold his stance:

David and Philopoemen⁴⁷⁰ withdraw as soldiers and return as statesmen; Solon⁴⁷¹ withdraws as a merchant and returns as a statesman; Caesar withdraws as a politician and returns as a statesman; Loyola withdraws as a soldier and returns a saint; and all these changes of capacity are in the direction of 'etherealization'. **On the other hand, Muhammad's career taken as a whole, appears to have been a movement in the opposite sense. For though in the first stage of his career he withdraws as a merchant and returns a prophet, in the second stage he withdraws as a prophet and returns as a conqueror.** In other words, the second stage of Muhammad's career, which is the conspicuously successful stage, is apparently the exact inverse of the career of Loyola; and if Loyola's career is a striking example of spiritual transfiguration, **Muhammad's, by the same token, is an equally striking example of spiritual bathos.** This exceptional feature on Muhammad's career calls for further examination.⁴⁷²

We, however, observe that Mr. Toynbee spoiled his own integrity as a historian and a Christian scholar who could not have been unaware of the historical facts especially pertaining to the missions, the lives and efforts of the Prophets of the Lord like Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua and David etc. Toynbee had no justification at all to compare the career of the promised Prophet of the Lord with ordinary individuals like Solon (638-558 BC) a statesman, poet and lawmaker whose had failed during his own times. Caesar (100-44 BC) had never been acknowledged as religious or moral ideal to be imitated as role model for godliness and righteousness. As for Loyola⁴⁷³

⁴⁷⁰ Philopoemen (253– 183 BC) was a skilled Greek general and statesman, who was Achaean strategos on eight occasions.

⁴⁷¹ Solon (638-558 BC) was an Athenian statesman, lawmaker and poet.

⁴⁷² Toynbee, *A Study of History*, p. 466-467.

⁴⁷³ Many persons in the western history had the surname of Loyola. Toynbee perhaps refers to Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) in Spain who is considered the founder of Jessuits.

(1491-1556), the founder of Jesuits, he had mainly been the leader of a minority group among the hundreds of Christian factions and cannot be quoted as a universally acclaimed model of rectitude or Prophethood. He was well-known for his misogyny. He thought that he saw a similarity between woman and Satan. "*The enemy conducts himself as a woman. He is a weakling before a show of strength and a tyrant if he has his will*".⁴⁷⁴ We, therefore, cannot take him as a well balanced human leader or a theologian. As such, no prudent person could be expected to compare the most glorious career of Muhammad as the final and promised prophet of the Lord for mankind with any Tom, Dick or Harry in the manner Mr. Toynbee suggested to his readers.

A historian of Toynbee's repute could hardly be expected to ignore the fact that the prophets of the Lord were bound only to abide by the Divine commandments. In all other matters where no fresh commandment had been received by them, they were obliged only to follow the traditions of the prophets who had preceded them. As such, the prophets had never been under any obligation to imitate the careers of ordinary individuals like Solon, Loyola and others.

The foremost ground of Toynbee's denunciation of the Prophet ﷺ had been the conquests made by him in his capacity as a prophet of the Lord which according to him was a spiritual bathos and something contemptible for the Prophets. He, however, fails to quote any scriptural prohibition for the prophets not to fight in the way of the Lord or to conquer the lands where people had been violating the commandments of the Lord and spreading injustice, oppression and immorality.

Toynbee perhaps intentionally ignores the fact that the Prophets were duty bound to remove coercion and obstructions in the way of the people and to fight against the idolator kings, oppressors and other enemies of the Lord. The Qur'an, therefore, guides the believers that:

To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged;- and verily, Allah is most

⁴⁷⁴ Mary Daly, *The Church and The Second Sex*, p. 100-101.

powerful for their aid;-⁴⁷⁵

And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah altogether and everywhere; but if they cease, verily Allah doth see all that they do.⁴⁷⁶

And why should ye not fight in the cause of Allah and of those who, being weak, are ill-treated (and oppressed)?- Men, women, and children, whose cry is: "Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from thee one who will protect; and raise for us from thee one who will help!"⁴⁷⁷

It is, therefore, evident from the guidance of the Lord that the mission of the prophets also included freedom of people from oppression of the tyrants by saving them from wrong doers and to remove disorder and chaos in the society. Most of the Jewish prophets had been fighting against the injustice, oppression and polytheism as well as the foreign rulers not believing in the Lord God of the Israelites. The prophets had to resist any violation of the Law of the Lord by utilizing all the means at their disposal. They never had any instructions from the Lord to live a beggarly life of utter humility and submissiveness as we find attributed to Jesus Christ by the Evangelists who had no option except to depict him as a pacifist and a faithful subject of the Roman Empire. Mr. Toynbee had utterly forgotten the fact that the Evangelists being Greek speaking Roman citizens had no mettle to record the plain truth about the Jewish aspirations for freedom. Hence, instead of recording the struggle of Jesus for overthrow of the Romans, the evangelists preferred to save their skins by showing him docile and submissive to Rome.

As a prominent writer on history, Mr. Toynbee could hardly be expected to ignore the entire history of the Israelites and the Jews especially the messianic movements and their hopes for a Jewish/Israelite kingdom to rule over the nations on behalf of the Lord. He sets aside the fact that the kingdom of God on Earth had been the vision which had always been launching the Jews against the Egyptians,

⁴⁷⁵ Al-Qur'an 22:39 Yousuf Ali.

⁴⁷⁶ Al-Qur'an 8:39 Yousuf Ali.

⁴⁷⁷ Al-Qur'an 4:75 Yousuf Ali. The Jews, therefore, awaited such saviors or messiahs as their kings.

Babylonians, Greeks and the Romans etc.⁴⁷⁸ In view of this, we strongly denuounce the comments of Mr. Toynbee in the following:

The monument of Muhammad's life-work might have been something more **ethereal** than Islam as Islam has been and is, if only the Prophet's career had not taken this decisively political turn in its last chapter. **They denounce Muhammad's unfortunate metamorphosis, after his Hijrah, from a prophet into a conqueror as a mark of moral turpitude.** And this judgment cannot, in equity, be allowed to pass without taking into consideration the circumstances in which the metamorphosis occurred.⁴⁷⁹

In our view, Toynbee's missionary zeal seemed to override his integrity as a true and faithful reporter of historical facts. He had no good reasons to ascribe unfortunate metamorphosis to the Holy Prophet ﷺ alleging the change from a prophet into a conqueror which to him was a mark of moral turpitude. While doing so he had entirely ignored that all prophets of Israel after Moses had to follow him as a lawgiver and role-model of virtuousness. The life of Moses can, therefore, serve as a glorious example for us. It was the Lord who commanded Moses to go to the Israelites and tell them that:

6. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: **7.** And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. **8.** And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I

⁴⁷⁸ For a proper comprehension of the Jewish concept of kingdom of God, Messianic movements and efforts of Jesus to serve as the king of the Jews, our readers may go through chapter 11 and 12 titled 'Kingdom of God' and 'King of the Jews' respectively in the book 'Revolution in Judea' by Hyam Maccoby (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company, 1980).

⁴⁷⁹ Toynbee, *A Study of History*, p. 468.

am the LORD.⁴⁸⁰

Skipping over a long story of struggle of Moses with the Pharaoh and his people to seek freedom of the Israelites from them, he succeeded to lead them into the wilderness. There the Israelites had to make many conquests for their survival. Besides subduing Midianites and the Amalekites etc. the Israelites stood on the border line of the Promised Land by-passing the Edomites and the Moabites. They had climbed Mt. Nebo where Moses died before entering Palestine.

Toynbee must also have been aware of the fact that after the death of Moses, the Lord had directed the prophet Joshua bar Nun to lead the Israelites and to go across the river Jordan to occupy the lands of Canaan. The readers can have a detailed study of his conquests as well as the ruthless record of the expeditions led by him⁴⁸¹ as recorded in the book of "Joshua" in the Bible. The history of Israelites under the judges and the kings also reveals that the matter did not end there. Struggle for domination has always continued throughout the world. No student of Bible can, therefore, deny the fact that in addition to being the prophet and lawgiver of Israel, Moses also had to serve as a sovereign among them. If no spiritual bathos could be ascribed to the conquests of Moses, Joshua, David and other prophets, there can be no justification to malign the Holy Prophet ﷺ on the same account.

Factually, all the Prophets of the Lord were dutibound to fulfill the very first commandment of the Lord as recorded in the Genesis:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, **and replenish the earth, and subdue it:** and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.⁴⁸²

⁴⁸⁰ Exo 6:6-8 KJV.

⁴⁸¹ We will also like to remind people like Mr. Toynbee that Joshua had been the original Hebrew name given to Jesus Christ by his parents. Jesus a Greek name is, therefore, a misnomer for the Holy Prophet of God.

⁴⁸² Gen 1:28 KJV.

About 350 years after Moses and Joshua, King Saul reigned the Israelites up to 1012 BC. Subsequently, David emerged as a King and turned out to be the greatest conqueror among the Israelites. He bequeathed a long dynasty of Kings after him in Judea. David had been the most celebrated and ideal king of the Israelites believed to be a prototype of **'the Messiah' also declared as 'the man after God's heart' 'which will fulfill all my will'**.⁴⁸³ About him, it had been recorded:

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.⁴⁸⁴

The Lord also confirmed about his covenant with David to last forever (Ps. 89:3-4, 20-37). The Covenant for everlasting Kingdom among his descendants was also affirmed in 2Sam 7:12-16, Jer 33:17, 21, 26.

It is, therefore, apparent from the above that conquest of lands and establishment of kingdom in the name of the Lord had been the the special blessings of the Lord on the prophets He chose for the same. Only perverted minds like Toynbee can ascribe moral turpitude or unfortunate metamorphosis to the blessings of the Lord. The conquests of Moses, Joshua, David or anyone else cannot, therefore, be taken as turning away from the prophetic mission. Unfortunately, the historians from the northern tribes had painted a perverted picture of the luminous characters of Judah and his descendants including David and Solomon. It was perhaps due to the afore-stated corruption in the history of Israel that they did not acknowledge David and Solomon as Prophets of the Lord. The Qur'an on the other hand did not endorse the filthy stories such as described in 2Sam Ch. 11. Similarly, it absolves the family from the blemish suggested in 2Sam 12:11 and the description of the event in 2Sam 16:21-22. Qur'an, as such, absolves all the holy Prophets from moral perversion introduced by the Israelites in the Holy Book. For further details please refer to our book *'Israelites vs. Other Nations'*.

⁴⁸³ 1Sa 13:14 & Acts 13:22 (KJV).

⁴⁸⁴ Psa 2:7 KJV.

Our objective study of the scriptures has revealed no prohibition of conquests to the prophets. The Lord, in fact, referred to the same as a special favor from Him as we find in the following:

David, behold, We have appointed thee a viceroy in the earth; therefore judge between men justly, and follow not caprice, lest it lead thee astray from the way of God.⁴⁸⁵

It is pertinent to mention here that this special favor of designating David as viceroy of the Lord on earth was given to no one else than Adam in the Qur'an (2:30). God also stressed the high rank of David as a prophet and messenger e.g. referring to Abraham God said:

And We gave him Isaac and Jacob and guided them, as We had guided Noah before them, and of his descendants, David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. Thus We reward those who are upright and do good. (6:84)

Besides the above, the granting of the book i.e. Zabur (the Psalms) has been mentioned in 4:163 and 17:55 besides about 14 times in other parts of the Qur'an.

It is evident from the above that the implementation of the rule of God on Earth by acting as a king always enjoyed blessings of the Lord. To sanctify a person as a king, therefore, the Israelites used to anoint him. All the judges of the Israelites had been ruling them in the name of the Lord without assuming other characteristics of the kings. The Israelites had themselves asked the Almighty to appoint a king for them (1Sam Ch. 8). It was, therefore, in response to their own request that the Lord had appointed Saul as the first king among them. He defeated various enemies of the Israelites including the Philistines, the Aemelkites and others (1Sam Ch.13-15). Eventually, David had succeeded Saul as king of Israel.

Like other prophets, Jesus too had been obliged to make earnest efforts for freedom of the Israelites from the foreign rulers and to establish the kingdom of God on Earth. **Establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth had, therefore, been the central theme of Jesus's teachings.** He and his followers continued to pray for the

⁴⁸⁵ Al-Qur'an 38:26 A. J. Arberry.

arrival of the kingdom of God with power. Although Jesus could not succeed to fulfill his desires yet no 'spiritual bathos' can be alleged to him for such an aspiration or attempt. Mr. Toynbee, therefore, had no justification to allege any moral perversion or turpitude to the prophets who succeeded to act as vicegerents of the Lord on Earth. It is on record that both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ had been assassinated on apprehension of revolt from them. The Evangelists report the triumphant and regal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem with great number of his enthusiastic followers. Hyam Maccoby, therefore, writes that:

All the Gospels record that Jesus, as he entered Jerusalem, was "**Son of David**" and "**King of Israel**." Acclaimed as the rightful King of the Jews, Jesus entered Jerusalem, riding an ass's foal in deliberate fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah (Zech. IX. 9):

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion;
Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem;
Behold, thy King cometh unto thee;
He is just and having salvation;
Lowly, and riding upon an ass;
And upon a colt, the foal of an ass.

When the people greeted him as King, raised the ancient cry of independence, "Hosanna!" and strewed palms before him, they were well aware that they were engaged in an act of rebellion against Rome.⁴⁸⁶

Mathew also took it as a prophecy fulfillment of which has been recorded by him in the following words:

5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion, **Behold, thy King cometh unto thee**, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. **6.** And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, **7.** And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. **8.** And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. **9.** And the multitudes that went before, and that

⁴⁸⁶ Hyam Maccoby, *Revolution in Judaea*, 2nd Printing, (New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., INC. 1980), p. 131-132.

followed, cried, saying, **Hosanna**⁴⁸⁷ to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.⁴⁸⁸

Mark records that:

7. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him. **8.** And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way. **9.** And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: **10. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David**, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.⁴⁸⁹

Similarly, Luke reported that:

(...) because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the **Kingdom of God** should immediately appear.⁴⁹⁰

37. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; **38.** Saying, **Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord:** peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.⁴⁹¹

St. John, too, had endorsed the above in the following:

Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: **Blessed is the King of Israel** that cometh in the name of the Lord.⁴⁹²

Factually, the Jews had taken Jesus as the Messiah awaited by them. They, therefore, hastened to gather around him in the hope that he would free them from the yoke of the Romans. Perhaps the main reason for their subsequent rejection of Jesus had been his failure to prove himself as

⁴⁸⁷ Hosanna means 'save us'. It was the ancient cry of independence among the Israelites.

⁴⁸⁸ Mat 21:5-9 KJV.

⁴⁸⁹ Mar 11:7-10 (KJV).

⁴⁹⁰ Luke 19:11 KJV.

⁴⁹¹ Luk 19:37-38 KJV.

⁴⁹² Joh 12:13 KJV.

the son of David sitting on his throne to rule over them after expelling the Romans from the Holy Land.⁴⁹³ Besides all this, Luke shows the extreme harshness of Jesus against those who refuse to accept him as their king. He reports:

But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.⁴⁹⁴

We have quoted this verse from KJV. The Good News Bible has rendered the same in the following words:

Now, as for those enemies of mine **who did not want me to be their king**, bring them here and kill them in my presence!⁴⁹⁵

No one can deny the fact that Jesus was crucified on the charges of insurrection against Rome by pretending to be the king of the Jews. The same is also apparent from accusations written on his head as reported by all the Evangelists e.g.

And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.⁴⁹⁶

And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.⁴⁹⁷

And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.⁴⁹⁸

And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹³ As a ready reference for our readers, we suggest them to go through the chapters titled '*Messianic Hopes of the Israelites*' and '*Messianic Figures, Pretenders and Movements*' in our book '*From Judaism to Christianity*'.

⁴⁹⁴ Luk 19:27 KJV.

⁴⁹⁵ Luk 19:27 GNB.

⁴⁹⁶ Mat 27:37 (KJV).

⁴⁹⁷ Mar 15:26 (KJV).

⁴⁹⁸ Luk 23:38 (KJV).

⁴⁹⁹ Joh 19:19 (KJV).

To be the king of Israel was, therefore, the earnest desire of Jesus Christ and he left no stones unturned to establish his kingdom. If, however, Jesus failed to achieve his mission it does not make his desire to be a king despicable in any manner. Almost all the books pertaining to the life and teachings of Jesus Christ have described him as the King or King of Kings e.g. there is a books on the life of Jesus by Dorothy L. Sayers bearing the title '*The Man Born to Be King*'. Similarly, we also find a famous film named *King of Kings*. Jesus also had been acknowledged as a Messiah (The Anointed One) by his apostles. It is worth noting here that all the kings of Israel used to be anointed by the high preists. The editors of *Judaisms and Their Messiahs* record that:

In Psalms of Solomon 17, which is neither apocalyptic nor eschatological, **the messiah is an idealized, future Davidic king** who also exhibits traits of sage and teacher.⁵⁰⁰

The observation is also applicable to Jesus the Messiah sent as the last warner of the Lord towards the Israelites. No doubt the western world takes Mr. Toynbee as one of the most celebrated men of letters among them yet we observe extreme partiality in him about those who are non-Christians. As regards the life of Jesus, Mr. Toynbee failed to take in view the historical as well as circumstantial evidence about Jesus as could be expected from a great historian. It was utterly due to his faith that he had to rely on idealistic presentation of Jesus of faith by the Greco-Roman evangelists who had no option except to show Jesus as a docile subject of Rome. Toynbee himself had been brought up under the cultural influence of Greco-Roman law and traditions. It was distasteful for him to surrender before the commandments of the Lord which were at variance from the Law in vogue in the West. It was, therefore, impossible for him to appreciate anything in the life, teachings and reforms made by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Factually the Lord never had prohibited His Prophets and their followers from conquering other lands to establish peace justice and faith therein. Anyhow, the Lord also did

⁵⁰⁰ *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, edited by Jacob Neusner and others, (Cambridge: Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1993), p. 3.

not allow compelling anyone to accept faith. For this they had been advised that:

Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things.⁵⁰¹

In spite of all this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not advise his followers to live on begging from others while wandering from place to place in the manner Jesus had advised his disciples (Mar 6:7-13, Mat 10:1-15). Such assertions seem to be the handiwork of the evangelists as well as other Christian fathers who were extremely scared of the punitive action from the Roman Authorities. They, therefore, depicted Jesus much weaker, meak and submissive than he might actually had been. Since the true report about the struggle of Jesus might have invited wrath of the Roman Authorities against the writers, they had to present Jesus' teachings in a manner favorable to the Romans. So much so that Jesus has been reported having said:

Jesus said, "**My kingdom does not belong to this world**; if my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would fight to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish authorities. No, my kingdom does not belong here!"⁵⁰²

Instead of reporting facts, therefore, the evangelists had to articulate utter failures of Jesus Christ as the most triumphal events in the history of humankind. For this, the death of Jesus in an ignoble manner at the Roman crucifix was converted into his glorious and vicarious sacrifice to save the entire humankind from their sins. Similarly, they had to concoct the story of the resurrection of Jesus interpreting the same to be his victory over sin and death. In view of all this, we have no reasons to assume that a scholar with the frame of Prof. Arnold Toynbee might have been unaware of the afore-stated contents of the New Testament. If no spiritual bathos can be ascribed to Jesus

⁵⁰¹ Al-Qur'an 2:256 Yousuf Ali.

⁵⁰² Joh 18:36 GNB.

Christ for his unsuccessful attempt to turn himself into a king or a conqueror from a Prophet ﷺ, we cannot blame Prophet Muhammad ﷺ for his unparelled success in establishing the Kingdom of God on Earth. In this respect, Prof. Toynbee seemed to have forgotten the warning of Jesus Christ that:

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.⁵⁰³

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?⁵⁰⁴

Increase in knowledge usually has a converse relationship with prejudice and ignorance. Only the Hypocrites can fuse learning with their narrow-mindedness as evident from the afore-stated observations of Mr. Toynbee.

As against the Christian apologists, the Muslim historians had no fear of any authority in the world. They, therefore, depict the followers of the Holy Prophet ﷺ going to far off lands for preachings in a respectable manner. For this, they followed the guidance of the Lord quoted below:

Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance.⁵⁰⁵

Edward William Lane and Stanly Lane Pool

Due to suffering from severe Islamophobia, Edward William Lane (1801-1876) had lost all his senses to differentiate between the messages or the words of God revealed to the prophets and the contents of the novels, short stories, pornographic descriptions or poems authored by the known or anonymous writers to entertain and amuse the people. In spite of the fact that the entire Arabic speaking world has been bowing down their heads before the miraculous revelations, the guidance, the excellence and the eloquence

⁵⁰³ Mat 7:5 KJV.

⁵⁰⁴ Luke 6:41 KJV.

⁵⁰⁵ Al-Qur'an 16:125 Yousuf Ali.

of the Qur'an, Edward William Lane failed to appreciate the wisdom of God for repeating, reminding and stressing the most important themes in it. He perhaps expected to find interesting subjects and juicy stories in the Qur'an like those inserted by human hands in the Old Testament. We, therefore, need to remind people such as William Lane that the Qur'an is the word of God from the beginning to the end. God, however, had been under no obligation to convey His messages in the manner pleasing to the West. To rehearse, revive, restore and perfect His message had been the primary purpose of the Lord which has been fulfilled in the best manner in the text of the Qur'an. **Those who reject the message of the Lord after going through the Qur'an will find no excuse before the Almighty on the Day of Judgment.** The true guidance from the Lord had been made available to them without caring for anybody who may reject it scornfully. On the Day of Judgment, however, they will have to account for their arrogance and refusal of the truth. Edward William Lane had been one of such people who instead of believing in the Qur'an chose to spread disinformation about it. Even Stanley Lane Poole while writing the preface to the '*Selections from the Qur'an*' went further than Edward William Lane to scandalize the Holy Prophet ﷺ without thorough study of the history and traditions of Islam. He writes that:

The chaotic arrangement and frequent repetitions, and the obscurity of the language, are sufficient to deter the most persistent reader, **whilst the nature of a part of its contents renders the Kuran unfit for a woman's eye.**⁵⁰⁶

Since the publication of William Lane's Book '*Selections from the Qur'an*' in June 1878, the orientalists and the Historians as well as members of the Christian clergy have been blindly repeating the words of Stanley Lane Poole as an undeniable truth about the shortcomings in the Qur'an. We have, therefore, gone into detail to refute most of such criticism against the Qur'an in our chapters titled *Al-Qur'an*

⁵⁰⁶ Edward William Lane, *Selections from the Qur'an*, (London: Trubner & Co. Ludgate Hill, 1879), p. v, (Preface).

I, *Al-Qur'an II*, "*Qur'an as Marvel of the Revelation*" and "*Certain Peculiarities of Qur'an*" in our book "**God and the Universe**". The readers can find appropriate answers to the objections raised by Edward as well as Stanley's writings against Islam.

In the present context, however, we need to focus our attention to the last part of the quotation i.e. '**the nature of a part of its contents that renders the Qur'an unfit for a woman's eye**'. This observation shows not only the shallow-ness of the knowledge of Stanley Lane Poole about Islam but also undermines his integrity as a scholar seriously. Muslims strongly condemn his unjustified remarks. **The Qur'an in fact contains no filthiness, obscenity, pornography, incest, immorality or indecent words as we find recorded in the Old Testament.** For a comparison between the scriptures, the lovers of truth may consult the language used in the Songs of Solomon e.g.

You, my love, excite men as a mare excites the stallions of Pharaoh's chariots (Son 1:9 GNB)

And

Your breasts are like gazelles, twin deer feeding among lilies (Son 4:5 GNB).

For some other examples of pornography, lewdness and incest they may refer to Gen 12:10-13, Gen 20:1-2, Gen 38:15-18, Gen 38:26, Jos Ch. 2, Ruth Ch. 3, 4, 2Sam 11:2-5, 2Sam 16:22, 2Sam Ch. 13, 1Chr 3:5, Jer 13:27 some of which had already been quoted by us. As against this, readers will find no lewd or immoral description in the Qur'an.

Bible in the Eye of Christian Scholars

Finding it impossible to go into further details here, it may suffice to quote just two passages from the Christian writers exposing the true position about sacredness of the text of the Bible:

Observes Julian Pitt-Rivers, a British anthropologist who

recalls his shock at discovering at a tender age that rape and mass murder are not the only dirty little secrets of the Bible: "incest, fratricide, filicide, wife-lending, polygamy, **homosexuality and prostitution**" **were among the revelations for a curious young boy at home alone with the family Bible.** "It seemed positively unfair," Pitt-Rivers remarks, "that Adam and Eve should have been cast out of Eden for such a trivial peccadillo as eating an apple off the wrong tree."⁵⁰⁷

Another scholar observes about the Bible that:

From start to finish, it is a book of wild, shattering behavior," reports Michael Ventura, a newspaper columnist whose thoroughly modern mind was blown by what he found in the Bible. "Women consort with serpents, brothers kill one another, peoples are massacred, tribes roam deserts, babies are abandoned, murder follows prophecy, prophecy follows murder, dancers call for the heads of prophets." And Ventura comes to the conclusion that **any society which elevates the Bible to the stature of Holy Writ is bound to be outrageous.** "It is ridiculous," he concludes, "to expect a civilization based on such a book to be other than wild and shattering."⁵⁰⁸

The falsehood of Stanley Lane Poole is evident also from the fact that he utterly failed to quote any words or phrases from the Qur'an to prove it falling short of the highest standard of moral sanctity expected from a Holy Book. He could not point out any obscenity, immorality, vulgarity, untruth or contradiction etc. in the text of the Qur'an. Stanley Lane Poole, therefore, had no substance to support his observation that "*the nature of a part of its contents that renders the Qur'an unfit for a woman's eye*". In the absence of any examples from the Qur'an to sustain his view, therefore, impairs seriously the uprightness or reliability of Stanley Lane Poole. One of the reasons for his scurrilous remarks against the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Qur'an was that before his remarks about the Qur'an, he

⁵⁰⁷ Jonathan Kirsch, *The Harlot by the Side of the Road* (NY: Ballantine Books, 1997), p. 9.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 11.

had gone through the fictional work الف ليلة وليلة (*One Thousand and One Nights*) translated by his uncle Edward William Lane. The Said translation had polluted his mind to such an extent that he had lost his sense of morality to differentiate between a correctly preserved revelation from the Lord God and the human fictional work containing mixture of ancient and medieval Arabic, Persian, Mesopotamian, Indian, Jewish, and Egyptian folklore and literature of the East. Mr. Lane might also have gone through the Kitab al-Aghani (The book of songs by Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani also known as al-Isbaghani) which ran over ten thousand pages consisting of songs, including one hundred collected to amuse Caliph Haroon Rasheed. True Muslims, however, take such material as rubbish than something to certify the history and culture of the society centring around the promised Prophet of the Lord ﷺ.

Similarly, the choice of Edward William Lane from the Qur'an and criticism on the same may, therefore, be studied keeping in view his translation of '*One Thousand and One Nights*'. We could hardly expect anything better from the men whose mind was already obsessed by immoralities, suspense, emotion, sexual humor, crime, horror stories, fantasy and science fictions studied by them in the books like *One Thousand and One Nights*. As such keeping in view the polluted minds of Edward William Lane and Stanley Lane Poole about the Eastern World, it was natural for them to evaluate Islam and Qur'an through tinted glasses. Stanley Lane Poole's views about Qur'an, therefore, cannot be taken as an unbiased study of Islam and Qur'an as perfectly preserved guidance from the Lord. Stanley Lane Poole (1854-1931), while editing the work of his uncle Edward William Lane went further away from the truth. He says:

As a social system Islam is a complete failure: it has misunderstood the relations of the sexes, upon which the whole character of a nation's life hangs, **and by degrading women, has degraded each successive generation of their children down an increasing scale of infamy and corruption, until it seems almost impossible to reach a lower level of vice.**⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁹ Edward William Lane, *Selections from the Qur'an*, (London: Trubner & Co. Ludgate Hill, 1879), p. lxxxix, (Introduction).

Both Edward William Lane and Stanley Lane Poole had extremely agonistic and biased opinion against the Muslims whether Arabs or the Turks. During the time of their writings, they were feeling themselves supreme against the Muslim world. As such, they felt free to accuse Qur'an, the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims in the manner they pleased. Feeling free to write anything to defame Islam they perhaps had forgotten their own history during the medieval times and especially during the colonization period about which we have written in detail in 2nd volume of our book *Slavery and Human Rights through the Ages* 2017. Their futile and baseless allegations, therefore, have no effect on the Qur'an or the faith of the Muslims. Both of them failed to observe the resurgence of Islam spreading at much faster speed as compared to any other religion in the world.

Stanley Lane Poole continues to add to his introduction as quoted below:

The fatal spot in Islam is the degradation of women. The true test of a nation's place in the ranks of civilisation is the position of its women. When they are held in reverence, when it is considered the most infamous of crimes to subject a woman to dishonour, and **the highest distinction to protect her from wrong; when the family life is real and strong, of which the mother-wife is the heart**⁵¹⁰; **when each man's pulse beats loyal to womanhood, then is a nation great.** When women are treated as playthings, toys, drudges, worth anything only if they have beauty to be enjoyed or strength to labour; when sex is considered the chief thing in a woman, and heart and mind are forgotten; when a man buys women for his pleasure and dismisses them when his appetite

⁵¹⁰ Although we have no exact knowledge of the times when Mr. Lane Poole was giving such remarks yet in the present times we observe that family life in the West is dwindling at a fast speed. It may, however, take another hundred years when we will find no one talking of 'mother wife' in the West. There will be no question of pedigree at all. Even at present many women in Scandinavia desire to have some child with nameless father. As such, one can easily determine which of the societies is heading towards treating women as play things, toys and drudges. Only the freedom of sex including homosexuality, will be enough to erode all conceptions of a pure lineage, family or a race.

is glutted, then is a nation despicable.⁵¹¹

It was a great untruth on the part of Stanley Lane Poole to observe that degradation of women was a fatal spot in Islam. Had he been living today he would have realized that his afore-stated observations exactly describe the position of women and treatment with them in the Western Christendom than anywhere else in the world. If the true test of a nation's place in the ranks of civilization is the position of its women and the highest distinction to protect them from wrong then the **Western Christendom today ranks lowest in the world**. He perhaps failed to take a notice of the fact that the family life in the west was suffering from erosion even during his own time. Presently, most of the Britishers, French, Italians and even Germans are avoiding marriage or a family life. A great percentage of children is being born out of wed-lock. To know the exact figures of different nations, the readers may consult Yale Global Online and OECD database at OECD.org on the internet. The fast increasing trend of free sex, homosexuality, couples living together without a wed-lock and birth of fatherless children in USA, South American countries, the Scandinavian and other western countries at the present times clearly indicates the extinction of family life within a century or more in future.

To contradict Stanley Lane Poole, however, it will be better to quote the observation of French polymath Gustave Le Bon⁵¹² (1841-1931 AD) who frankly admitted that:

Gustave Le Bon writes: **"In the days of the Islamic civilization, women were given exactly the same position and status which European women held a long time after.** This meant that after the chivalrous conduct of the Andalusian Arabs, the example was set to be propagated in Europe . . . Among Europeans, Chivalrous behaviour, an aspect of which is the gallant treatment of women, came down from the Muslims, and was copied from them. **The religion which was able to deliver women from a low and inferior position and could raise her to a position of**

⁵¹¹ Edward William Lane, *Selections from the Qur'an*, p. lxxxix, (Introduction).

⁵¹² Gustave Le Bon was a French polymath whose areas of interest included anthropology, psychology, sociology, medicine, invention, and physics.

respect and honour was Islam and not Christianity, as is commonly imagined. For we see that in the Middle-ages our kings and monarchs had no respect for women, despite their being Christians. After the study of ancient histories, there remains no doubt that in the days before the Moslems taught our forefathers to have kindly feeling and respect for women, our kings and monarchs treated women with extreme brutality. . .⁵¹³

It is, therefore, obvious from the above that the afore-stated observation of Stanley Lane Poole blindly ignored the actual treatment of women in the Western Christendom during about 1800 years before his writings. In the middle ages thousands and thousands of women were subjected to witch-hunt and many of them were burnt alive on stake. Even during the past few centuries women especially the black slaves from Africa have been treated worse than the chattels and exploited sexually by the white men throughout the Northern and the Southern Americas. **The Mulattos, Creols, Peninsulars and Mestizos** in the southern and the northern Americas, in the Caribbean countries and many other parts of the world are the living evidence of the white men exploiting the black women and the slaves. Women have, therefore, been target of unspeakable miseries during the entire period of colonization. For details kindly refer to our chapters Titled '*Dehumanization of Slaves*', '*Horrors of Slavery*' and '*Towards the New World Order*' in our book '*Slavery and Human Rights Through the Ages*' Vol. II. We hope after going through the chapters mentioned above, the open minded readers will themselves be able to know who are to be blamed for the allegations of Stanley Lane Poole quoted above.

The first volume of this book also reveals the true position of women of Dalits a lower caste in India and women in the Western Christian countries as against the women belonging to the Muslim world. The study of the same may lead the readers towards the truth.

As regards the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we observe that in addition to introducing various reforms during his age

⁵¹³ Murtada Muttrahhari, *The Rights of Women in Islam*, p. 332.

between 55 to 59 years, he was obliged to provide protection to many divorcees, widows and their children. On an analysis of his marriages we find that he married the widows such as Juwayriah, Umm-e-Habibah, Safiyyah bint Huyay, and Maymoonah bint al-Harith primarily for political reasons and to provide shelter to them than for gratification of his sex. It can also be imagined that he married certain women to get some male heir but he had none except Ibrahim from Mariyah Qibtiyah who died at the age of 18 months in the 8th AH. None among other wives had any child from the Prophet ﷺ. The sexual vigour or the position of fertility of the Holy Prophet ﷺ during that time can be assessed from the same. A cursory glance over his life can also help us to refute the false allegations of sensuality against the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born at Makkah in about 570 AD. Abdullah his father had been the most handsome youth of his times. He was married to Aminah bint Wahb ibn Abd Manaf ibn Zuhrah Makkah. She as such was member of Banu banu Zuhra Clan of Quraysh.⁵¹⁴ The same article of Wikipedia reports her birth at Medina. Abdullah the Father of Muhammad ﷺ died a few months before the birth of his son. The Holy Prophet ﷺ had, therefore, born as an orphan. Abdul Mutlib the grandfather of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was then the chief of the Quraysh at Makkah. According to the prevailing system in Quraysh, Muhammad as an infant was handed over to Halimah Saadiah who served as his foster mother (wet nurse) for more than two years. Even after the end of two years, his mother returned him to the same family of Banu Saad to grow in the pure environments of the desert up to about five years. Later on when he had attained the age of about 6 years, his mother took him to Medina to visit her parents. During their return journey to Makkah, Amna the mother of the Prophet ﷺ died at the village of al-Abwah about 222 kms from Medina on way to Makkah. She was buried there. Muhammad ﷺ the orphan was taken to Makkah by Umm-e-Ayman the slave of his father along-with other persons in the Caravan. Abdul Mutlib, the grandfather of the Holy Prophet ﷺ died at Makkah when Muhammad was just 8 years old. He,

⁵¹⁴ Wikipedia, s.v. 'Amina'.

therefore, was taken in care by his uncle Abu Talib. The circumstances did not allow him to learn reading or writing throughout his life. By and by Muhammad ﷺ grew up and developed into the most handsome young man of Makkah. Besides his comely habits, he was famous for his honest dealings and truth. This was the reason that even from the early days of his life Muhammad was known as a very gentle, honest and truthful person. People, therefore, used to call him **Sadiq and Ameen** even during his youth.

Khadijah bint Khuwaylid was a rich widow of Makkah who used to send her caravans of goods to Al-Sham i.e. Syria and Palestine. Learning about the sagacity and uprightness of Muhammad ﷺ, she offered him to lead one of her caravans to Al-Sham from where he returned with fabulous profits. For details about his marriage with Khadijah Tahirah please refer to the account of Khadijah in the chapter '*Wives of the Prophet* ﷺ'. We, however, need to repeat here that Muhammad was 25 years at the time of his marriage with Khadijah who had already been widowed twice. By the time of her marriage with Muhammad ﷺ she was 40 years old having three children from her previous husbands. Although Muhammad was in his prime youth while Khadijah was much older than him yet they lived the life of an ideal wife and a loving husband for about 25 years. During this period of his full youth no signs of sensuality as alleged by the non-believers could be seen in the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Instead of showing any interest in women or accumulation of wealth, he had been living a life of piety and extreme generosity towards the poor. He was famous for his godliness and purity of character. Periodically, he would go to a cave named Hira about 3 miles from Makkah and spend several days in seclusion, meditation and worship of the Almighty there. It was during such a visit that he received his first revelations from the Almighty (Al-Qur'an 96:1-5) through Jibrael Amen. Muhammad ﷺ, as such, received Divine Call for his prophetic mission at the age of 40 years.

Khadijah by that time had become an aged woman of 55 years. Had the prophet any trend towards sensuality, this was the best period for him. Instead of running after women, he spent most of his time in worship of the Lord

and after receiving his call, he devoted himself entirely to the preaching of Islam. Later on at the age of 55 years his responsibilities had increased manifold while he had already spent up most of his sexual energy. To accuse him of sensuality at an old age of responsibility and extreme poverty, therefore, has no sense in it.

There can hardly be any doubt that the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had worked with utmost devotion to revive and rehearse the true teachings of the prophets from Adam to Jesus Christ. Unluckily, the everlasting effect and great magnitude of the achievements of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with scanty means at his disposal could receive no appreciation from people with the mindset of Mr. Toynbee. As against him, there had been hundreds of Christian scholars who dealt more fairly with the life and work of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Reproduction of the entire contents of such observations may require dozens of books. Due to paucity of time and space at our disposal; we cannot afford to deal the matter elaborately here. Anyhow, we quote a few passages from Mr. Lamartine (the French writer, poet, politician and historian, 1790-1869). We are quoting from him only due to the fact that he seems to be a lover of truth. Godfrey Higgins had been another impartial writer from Britain from whom we have quoted to end this chapter of the book.

Lamertine's Observations About the Holy Prophet ﷺ

In his book *History of Turkey*, Mr. Lamartine reports about the Holy Prophet ﷺ that:

His herd of camels, and his flock of sheep, his sole heritage, became, at his death, the common property, subject only to a pension on the public treasury for the support of his widows and his servants. "A prophet," said he, "should leave no inheritance to his family upon the Earth. His goods belong to his nation."

Such were the life, the mission, and the death of Mahomet.

Never did man propose to himself voluntarily or otherwise, an end more sublime, since this end was superhuman; to sap the superstitions interposed between the creature and the Creator, to bring back God to man and

man to God, to restore the rational and holy idea of the Divinity amid that chaos of the material and disfigured deities of idolatry.

Never did man undertake, with resources so feeble, a task so disproportioned to human forces, since he had, in the conception and the execution of so vast a project, no other instrument than himself, and no other auxiliaries than a handful of barbarians in the corner of a desert.

Never, in fine, did man accomplish in less of time so immense and so durable a revolution in the world; since, in less than two centuries after his preaching, Islamism, preached and armed, reigned over the three Arabias, conquered to the unity of the Godhead, Persia, Khorassan, Transoxians Western India, Syria, Egypt, Ethiopia, all the known continent of Northern Africa, several islands of the Mediterranean Spain, and a part of Gaul.

If the grandeur of the design, the pettiness of the means, the immensity of the results, be the three measures of human genius, who would dare to compare humanly the greatest men of modern times to Mahomet? The most famous of them have agitated but armies, laws, empires; they have founded (when they founded any thing) but physical potencies, often crumbled to the earth before themselves. Mahomet has recast armies, legislations, empires, peoples, dynasties, with millions of men throughout a third of the inhabited globe. More than this, he recast altars, gods, religions ideas, creeds, souls. He has founded upon a book of which every letter is become a law, a spiritual nationality which embraces peoples of every tongue and race, and he has stamped as the indelible character of this Mussulman nationality, the hatred of false gods, and the passion of the one and true God. This patriotism, avengeful of the profanations of heaven, was the virtue of the children of Mahomet; **the conquest of one third the world to his doctrine was his miracle**; or rather, it was not the miracle of a man, but that of reason. The idea of the unity of God, proclaimed in the lassitude of fabulous theologians, had in itself such virtue, that in exploding upon his lips, it fired the temples of old idolatry, and kindled with their flames one third the globe.

Was this man an impostor? We do not think so, after having well studied his history. Imposture is the hypocrisy of conviction. Hypocrisy has not the might of conviction as falsehood has never the force of truth. If the force of projection be in mechanics the exact measure of the force of impulsion, so action is the measure, in history, of the force of inspiration. A thought that carries so high, so far, and so

durably must be a powerful thought; to be so powerful, it must have been sincere and well conceived. The internal inspiration of Mahomet was his only imposture. There were in his person two characters, the prophet of reason, and the visionary of ecstasy.

The inspirations of the philosopher were aided unconsciously by the visions of the patient. His dreaming, his deliriums, his swooning, during which his imagination traversed heaven, and conversed with fantastic beings, caused to himself the same illusions that he imposed on others. Arabian credulity invented the rest.

But his life, his meditations, his heroic blasphemies against the superstitions of his country, his daring in affronting the fury of the idolaters, his constancy in enduring it for fifteen years at Mecca, his acceptance of the part of laughing-stock and almost victim among his countrymen, his flight; in fine, his ceaseless preaching, his precarious wars, his confidence of success, his superhuman fortitude in reverses, his longanimity in victory, his ambition all of idea and none of empire, his prayers without end, his mystic converse with God, his death and his triumph after the tomb, attest more than an imposture — a conviction. It was this conviction that gave him the power of restoring a dogma. This dogma was twofold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God, the one saying what is God, the other saying what he is not; the one subverting with the sabre the divinities of falsehood, the other inaugurating with the word an idea.

Philosopher, orator, apostle, lawgiver, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a worship without images, founder of twenty terrestrial empires, and of one spiritual empire. Such was Mahomet!

What man was greater, by all the scales on which we measure human greatness?⁵¹⁵

Godfrey Higgins

Although observations of Lamartine seem to suffice as convincing reply to the observations of Mr. Toynbee yet it seems appropriate to quote also from Godfrey Higgins (1772-1833, the English magistrate and landowner, a prominent advocate for social reform, historian, and antiquarian). He observes that:

⁵¹⁵ A. De Lamartine, *History Of Turkey*, Vol. II (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1855), p. 153-155.

I shall abstain from giving any account of, or copying, the disgusting trash which has been written respecting the character and conduct of Mohamed by the Christian priests — some of them (Prideaux for instance) men of great learning and high respectability — men who, indeed ought to have been above such conduct, but whose zeal in this case has actually destroyed their sense of right and wrong, and, as it should seem, taken away from them the use of their understandings. If I were to detail the vulgar abuse in which they have indulged, no information respecting the character of Mohamed would thereby be conveyed to any liberal or reflecting mind, and the Christian religion would be wounded by the infamous behaviour of its professors. The folly of this conduct has been felt and admitted by the Rev. Dr. White, in the celebrated Bampton Lectures; and though, as we may expect from a Christian Doctor preaching to the ultra-orthodox University of Oxford, he was far from unprejudiced, yet he has admitted the truth of many of the assertions of the followers of Mohamed, which a liberal and reflecting mind could not deny, and thereby done himself the greatest honour ; and from him, as the very first of Christian authorities, I shall often have occasion to make quotations.⁵¹⁶

Here is another passage from Mr. Higgins appreciating the work and the character of the Holy Prophet ﷺ :

No holy water, no relic, no image, no picture, no saint, no mother of God, disgrace his religion. No such doctrines as the efficacy of faith without works, or that of a death-bed repentance, plenary indulgences, absolution, or auricular confession, operate first to corrupt, then to deliver up his followers into the power of a priesthood, which would of course be always more corrupt and more degraded than themselves. No, indeed! The adoration of one God, without mother, or mystery, or pretended miracle, and the acknowledgement that he, a mere man, was sent to preach the duty of offering adoration to the Creator alone, constituted the simple doctrinal part of the religion of the Unitarian of Arabia.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ Godfrey Higgins, *An Apology for the Life and Character of the Celebrated Prophet of Arabia, Called Muhammad*, (London: St. Paul's Churchyard; Hurst, Chance, and Co. 1829), p. 5.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid, p. 42.

REFORMS TO EMANCIPATE WOMEN

Islam excels all other religions of the world to introduce reforms for the welfare of man. For detailed study, the readers may go thorough our book '*Slavery and Human Rights through the Ages*'. As regards women, Islam enjoys distinction to acknowledge the equality of female rights as compared to males and grants them equitable rights with them. Islam aims at relieving women from coercion, oppression and degradation in any manner whatsoever. It, therefore, restores their social status and provides them protection from all types of miseries inflicted by the males on them. **Most important among the Islamic reforms was equality of the rights of women with men. Islam acknowledges women's independent personalities in soul and humanity in all respects.** They inherit from their relatives as per commandments of the Lord and are free to run business organizations independently. The Lord also had granted them the opportunity to participate in the religious festivals, prayers and preachings for Islam. It has dealt in detail with the special rewards assured to women due to their inabilities to offer prayers and fasting during the periods of their menses and childbirth. They, therefore, receive full compensation for the periods of childbirth and other disabilities if any.

Besides this, taking in view their duty to look after the home, to procreate and to rear children, Islamic division of labor suggests that earning the living and attending to all types of hard jobs outside the home must be the duty of the males. Except for any emergency, women must be relieved from struggle outside the house to earn their living. Normally it is the duty of husbands or males to provide shelter, sustenance and honorable living for the women under their custody. We have, therefore, gone into detail in various parts of the book to show the ancient traditions as well as the practices in the present times as against Islamic reforms in the same. Since our special concern had been to compare the Jewish, Christian and Islamic law and traditions it was necessary to recapitulate the same in this concluding chapter of the book. We shall, therefore, be recounting precisely some of the salient

features of Islamic reforms so that, **the readers may be able to draw a comparison between Islamic reforms and the reforms made by all other religions or institutions to safeguard honor, status, sustenance and shelter to women to save them from exploitation by the males.** We are, therefore, highlighting some of the main reforms in forth-coming discussion:

First of all we may rehearse the commandments of the Lord about marital laws, inheritance and treatment with women which form part of the enduring law of the Lord since ancient times. The believers, therefore, had to avoid any violation of the said law. God said:

22. And marry not women whom your fathers married,- except what is past: It was shameful and odious,- an abominable custom indeed. **23.** Prohibited to you (For marriage) are:- Your mothers, daughters, sisters; father's sisters, Mother's sisters; brother's daughters, sister's daughters; foster-mothers (Who gave you suck), foster-sisters; your wives' mothers; your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom ye have gone in, - no prohibition if ye have not gone in;- **(Those who have been) wives of your sons proceeding from your loins;** and two sisters in wedlock at one and the same time, except for what is past; for Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. **24.** Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: Thus hath Allah ordained (Prohibitions) against you: Except for these, all others are lawful, provided ye seek (them in marriage) with gifts from your property,- desiring chastity, not lust, seeing that ye derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed; but if, after a dower is prescribed, agree Mutually (to vary it), there is no blame on you, and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise. **25.** If any of you have not the means where with to wed free believing women, they may wed believing girls from among those whom your right hands possess: And Allah hath full knowledge about your faith. Ye are one from another: Wed them with the leave of their owners, and give them their dowers, according to what is reasonable: They should be chaste, not lustful, nor taking paramours: when they are taken in wedlock, if they fall into shame, their punishment is half that for free women. This (permission) is for those among you who fear sin; but it is better for you that ye practise self-restraint. And Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁸ Al-Qur'an 4:22-25 Yusuf Ali.

Other reforms introduced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ may be summarized in the following:

1. Equality of All Human Beings

The Hadith in the following covers all Muslims whether free or slaves. Islam preaches equality of mankind and creates no distinction between different races regions or colors of the people.

All people are equal, as equal as the teeth of a comb. There is no claim of merit of an Arab over a non-Arab, or of a white over a black person, or of a male over a female. Only God-fearing people merit a preference with God.⁵¹⁹

During the Farewell Hajj, the Holy Prophet had proclaimed that:

All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black nor a black has any superiority over a white - except by piety and good action.⁵²⁰

Unlike the Hindus who forbade the women and the Shudras (the low caste Hindus) to study their scriptures, the Qur'an does not believe in castes or Jatis. It, therefore, did not prohibit any human being men or women including non-Muslims to hear or to learn the Qur'an simply because it was from the one and the only Creator of the heavens and the Earth who is the Lord God of the entire universe and everything within it.

It was due to the said guidance that the Muslim men and women had been reciting from the Holy Qur'an and also studying Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to learn more and more about the precepts and practices of Islam. A large number of Muslim women had been memorizing the

⁵¹⁹ Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *Al-Musnad*, Cairo 1930, vol. VI, p. 411, cited by M. Abdul-Rauf in *The Islamic View of Women and the Family*, p. 21.

⁵²⁰ *Sahih Bukhari*, Vol. 7, Ch. 3

entire Qur'an from the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ till today. They, therefore, teach and preach others on the basis of the Qur'an.

2. Prohibition to Study the Scriptures

Religions such as Judaism and Hinduism debar the women from studying the sacred texts. The Rabbis were in general agreement that a woman was not required to study Torah even during the period of their cleanliness. Some of them were extremely hostile to the Idea. **'Whoever teaches his daughter Torah,' said one Rabbi, "Teaches her lasciviousness".**⁵²¹

Some scholars, therefore, deduce from the assertions such as quoted above that literacy was almost certainly confined to men. The same is also evident from the writings of St. Paul who said:

I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty' (1Timothy 2:9-15).⁵²²

As regards Hinduism, it has been quoted that:

"For women no sacramental rite is performed with sacred texts, thus the law is settled; women (who are) destitute of strength and destitute of the knowledge of the Vedic texts are as impure as falsehood itself, this is the fixed rule"⁵²³

In the words of Pandita Rama Bai, a woman was forbidden to read the sacred scriptures and had no right to pronounce a single syllable out of them. Women's only function was as

⁵²¹ Abba Eban, *Heritage, Civilization and the Jews*, (New York: Summit Books, 1984), p. 42.

⁵²² Mary Daly, p. 81.

⁵²³ *Woman's Plight*, p. 69, quoted from Thomas, P., *Indian Women Through the Ages*: p. 121.

Abbe Dubois put in "to minister to man's physical pleasures and wants....."⁵²⁴.

As compared to the above, Islam made it mandatory for men as well as women to learn the Qur'an and also to acquire knowledge of the scriptures along with other sciences. The Holy Prophet said:

Anas-ibn-Malik reported the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying: Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim man and woman.⁵²⁵

3. Humiliating Treatment With Women

The Torah has ordained that:

11. And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldest have her to thy wife; **12.** Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails; **13.** And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife. **14.** And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her.⁵²⁶

The readers will note that an individual Israelite could take home any beautiful woman of his choice without any permission from the commander of the Army. She will then be humiliated to shave her head and paring her nails and bewailing her father and her mother for a month. She will then become the wife of her captor who having no delight in her subsequently, shall let her go whither she will. All this shows that the Israelite captor had no sympathy with the captive women he married nor was he responsible for her future sustenance. As against this, Islam suggested

⁵²⁴ *Woman's Plight*, p. 61.

⁵²⁵ *Sunan Ibn Maja*, Chapter 17, Hadith No. 219, p. 97.

⁵²⁶ Deu 21:11-14 KJV.

proper method of divorce and sustenance as summarily described in our chapter on '*Divorce and Widowhood*' in the first volume of the book.

The readers will also observe the difference of treatment of the Muslims with the vanquished people. Muslim armies are not allowed to kill anyone except in the battle field. All the people surrendering themselves in the cities or the country will become *Dhimmi* i.e. protected person for the Muslims. There will be no molestation of women, children or the men who did not take part in the battle. Everything belonging to the citizens whether goods or animals will remain in their possession while everything belonging to the king or the government will be taken over by the Muslim armies. The difference in Muslim code of law and that of the Israelites can be noted from the following:

And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee. Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.⁵²⁷

The readers will observe that the verses quoted above conflict with the treatment of Moses with the Midianites. Even Joshua flouted this law repeatedly as is evident from Joshua 10:28-40 and 11:8-15. No reason has been given for the cruel but double standard adopted by *Torah* in this respect.

4. Killing or Sale of Daughters

Prior to Islam, the birth of a girl was despised by the Arabs and many other nations in the world. Many of them used to get rid of them either by killing or burying them alive. Islam strictly prohibited the practice as a heinous crime to be punished severely in the hereafter. Revealing the events of the Day of Judgment, the Lord said:

8. When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned. **9.**

⁵²⁷ Deu, 20:13-15 KJV.

For what crime she was killed?;⁵²⁸

As such all people who might have killed their daughters or sisters will have to account for their crime. Such people are sure to meet a painful doom.

Another great crime was to sell one's daughter. We find in the Exodus that:

And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do.⁵²⁹

The GNB renders this verse in the following words:

If a man sells his daughter as a slave, she is not to be set free, as male slaves are.⁵³⁰

As against the above, Islam strictly forbids killing or burying alive of the daughters. It also does not allow anyone to despise them or to sell them in any case.

5. Non-Virgins among the Vanquished People to be Killed

We read a fabulous but horrifying account of the Israelites sent by Moses to punish the Midianites. They were also bidden to kill all men there and each and **every married woman or women with children**. Only the virgins could be saved for the use or misuse of the Israelites. The army killed all the males there and looted everything from the town. It is said that in addition to what the soldiers kept for themselves, they came back with 675,000 sheep and goats, 72,000 cattle, 61,000 donkeys, and 32,000 virgins (Num 31:32-35). Moses was wroth with officers of the host as we find recorded in the following.

And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women

⁵²⁸ Al-Qur'an 81:8-9 Yusuf Ali.

⁵²⁹ Exo. 21:7 KJV.

⁵³⁰ Ibid, 21:7 GNB.

alive? (...) Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.⁵³¹

While the law quoted above seems to be made for the exclusive benefits of the Israelites, it is extremely cruel as well as discriminatory against other human beings who too were creatures of the same Lord God of the universe. Islam does not allow killing of any man or woman who had not been taking active part in the fight against the believers. It even forbids killing of any child or an injured soldier of the enemy. All conquered people not creating any trouble for the believers are termed as 'Dhimmi' (ذمى) who are assured peace and protection by the Muslims. The Dhimmis, however, are charged an annual tax known as Jizya which is assessed keeping in view the reasonable paying capacity of each individual. As against this, they enjoy exemption from compulsory military service and other taxes including Zakat which is obligatory for the Believers. For further details please refer to our book *Slavery and Human Rights Through the Ages*, Vol. I, Ch. 17, s.v. *War Codes and War Ethics in Islam*.

6. Overemphasis on Uncleanliness of Women

The Leviticus provides us with the following injunctions about the uncleanliness of women:

19. And if a woman have an issue, and her issue in her flesh be blood, **she shall be put apart seven days:**⁵³² **and whosoever toucheth her shall be unclean until the even.**
20. And every thing that she lieth upon in her separation shall be unclean: every thing also that she sitteth upon shall be unclean. **21.** And whosoever toucheth her bed shall wash his

⁵³¹ Num 31:15,17-18 KJV.

⁵³² The tradition of separation of women had not been exclusive only to the Israelites but many other nations also treated the women during their menstruation in the same manner. It has been stated that: *In many parts of south India till today a woman is relegated to live outside the house during her natural monthly periods. In the name of religion she becomes untouchable for those 5-6 days. She is not given food and nutrition.* V. Mohini Giri 'Deprived Devis' (New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 2006), p. 14.

clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even. **22.** And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even. **23.** And if it be on her bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it, he shall be unclean until the even. **24.** And if any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days; and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean.⁵³³

As against the most stringent laws of cleanliness quoted above, Islam suggests nothing to separate women during the menstruation or the forty days after the child birth. Women need not be separated from the houses or the beds of their husbands. They transmit no uncleanness to any person touching them or the things they sit on unless the blood of menses stains something. They may continue living in the house like all other inhabitants and attend to their daily assignments. Nothing shall become unclean just by sitting upon or touching by the unclean woman nor may anyone become unclean just by touching her bed or things. Other persons touching the unclean woman or things used by them need not take a bath or wash their clothes. **Islam forbids only the sexual intercourse with a menstruating woman or during her post-partum period of 40 days.** Sexual intercourse during such periods is a great sin. In spite of this, the transgressors of the said injunction will remain unclean only up to the time they take a bath. Separation of women and especially, outside the house or the village is not only an abominable disgrace for women but also a cruel tradition making women open to many other hazards. The Qur'an enjoins that:

They ask about the monthly course. Say, "It is a state of impurity; so keep apart from women during their monthly course and do not go near them until they are clean. When they have cleansed themselves, then you may go to them in the manner Allah has enjoined you." Most surely Allah loves those people who refrain from evil and keep themselves pure and clean.⁵³⁴

⁵³³ Lev 15:19-24 KJV.

⁵³⁴ Al-Qur'an 2:222 Maududi.

It is worth noting here that the words of the Qur'an i.e. *فاعتزلوا النساء في المحيض* implies withdrawing from sexual intercourse with the menstruating women. It does not mean that the women should be separated from the beds of their husbands or sent out of the house or the village. Various Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, therefore, elaborate the point for understanding the real import of the verse quoted above.

Since the LORD had created women with such a nature that they could not free themselves from menses or the childbirth, the Almighty gave them necessary relaxations about the rules of cleanliness to save them from the strict rules of cleanliness and purity coined by different societies in the world. We shall, therefore, be discussing the Islamic law about cleanliness of women during menses as well as during childbirth in the following:

7. Menses

Islam always treated women as an equally respectable partner in the lives of men. It takes their impurity due to menses or childbirth as a natural factor necessary to multiply the human race. There is no justification to despise them or to exaggerate their impurity on the said account. Islam, therefore, does not declare them as untouchables even during the periods of menses or the childbirth. Only the sexual intercourse with them is prohibited until they attain cleanliness. During uncleanness, women cannot touch the Holy Scriptures nor can they recite complete verses of the same. In case of dire need, such as teaching the students, they can touch the Qur'an with a cloth in between⁵³⁵ and recite from it by fragmenting one verse at a time.⁵³⁶

Women can pass through the mosque for some special need yet they are forbidden to stay in the mosques during the periods of uncleanness due to Haiz (menstruation) or Nifaas (puerperal condition i.e. blood flowing from the womb due to childbirth making them unclean for prayers

⁵³⁵ *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 'The Book of Menses, Ch. 'Reciting the Qur'an while laying in the lap of a Menstruating Wife'

⁵³⁶ Kindly refer to *Sahih al-Bukhari*, 'The Book of Menses, Ch. 'A Menstruating Women should perform all items of Hajj except circumambulation of Ka'aba.'

etc. for forty days). They stand absolved from the daily prayers (mandatory as well as optional) till they attain purity. As regards mandatory fasting during the month of Ramadan, the same have to be postponed to the days of cleanliness. With the exceptions noted above women can continue to perform all their household assignments as usual.

Muslim scholars, therefore, conclude that:

(i) it is not lawful to dislike the wife who is in menstrual state and to make separate arrangements for her boarding.

(ii) Body and dress of women in menstrual state do not make anyone unclean unless and until the blood of menstruation pollutes others.

(iii) It is lawful to eat the food prepared by the women in menstrual state.

(iv) It is lawful for them to wash the heads of their husbands and to comb their hairs. It is also lawful for the husbands to eat with their wives or to eat the food partly eaten by their wives in Haiz or Nifaas.

The precepts quoted above are based on the following Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ :

Narrated 'Aysha: While in menses, I used to comb the hair of Allah's Apostle.⁵³⁷

Narrated 'Aysha: The Prophet used to lean on my lap and recite Qur'an while I was in menses⁵³⁸

Narrated Um Salama: While I was laying with the Prophet under a single woolen sheet, I got the menses. I slipped away and put on the clothes for menses. He said, "Have you got "Nifaas" (menses)?" I replied, "Yes." He then called me and made me lie with him under the same sheet.⁵³⁹

Narrated 'Aysha: The Prophet and I used to take a bath from a single pot while we were Junub.⁵⁴⁰ During the menses, he used to order me to put on an Izar (dress worn below the waist) and used to fondle me. While in Itikaf, he used to bring

⁵³⁷ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 294.

⁵³⁸ Ibid, Hadith No. 296.

⁵³⁹ Ibid, Hadith No. 297.

⁵⁴⁰ *Junub* means: ritually impure due to sexual intercourse or seminal discharge. A person in such a state needs to take a bath in order to become ritually pure and be able to perform his prayers.

his head near me and I would wash it while I used to be in my periods (menses).⁵⁴¹

'Abdullah bin Sa'd narrated: "I asked the Prophet about eating with a menstruating woman. He said: "Eat with her." (*Sahih*)⁵⁴²

Narrated Asma': A woman came to the Prophet and said, "If anyone of us gets menses in her clothes then what should she do?" He replied, "She should (take hold of the soiled place), rub it and put it in the water and rub it in order to remove the traces of blood and then pour water over it. Then she can pray in it."⁵⁴³

'A'isheh reported: When anyone amongst us was menstruating the Messenger of Allah asked her to tie waist-wrapper during the time when the menstrual blood profusely flowed and then embraced her; and she ('A'isheh) observed: And who amongst you can have control over his desires as the Messenger of Allah had over his desires.⁵⁴⁴

Maimoonah (the wife of the Holy Prophet) reported: The Messenger of Allah contacted and embraced his wives over the waist-wrapper when they were menstruating.⁵⁴⁵

Kuraib the freed slave of Ibn Abbas, reported: I heard it from Maimoonah, the wife of the Apostle of Allah (May peace be upon him): The Messenger of Allah used to lie with me when I menstruated, and there was a cloth between me and him.⁵⁴⁶

Ayesha refers to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as having said that women should not offer prayers the moment menses occurs and they should take to prayers again after the usual period is over and they have had their bath.⁵⁴⁷

Many Ahadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ show that there is no need to over emphasize the uncleanness of women during their menstruation or childbirth:

'Abdullah b. Amr reported Allah's Messenger as saying: The whole world is a provision, and the best object of benefit of

⁵⁴¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 6, Hadith No. 298.

⁵⁴² Sahih Tirmidhi, Eng. Tr. By Abu Khaliyl, Hadith No. 133. Vol. 1, (Riyadh: Islamic Research Centre, Darussalam, 2007) pg. 158.

⁵⁴³ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Volume 1, Book 4, Hadith No. 227:

⁵⁴⁴ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith Number 0578:

⁵⁴⁵ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith Number 0579:

⁵⁴⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book 3, Hadith Number 0580:

⁵⁴⁷ Sunan-e-Nisaai.

the world is the pious woman.⁵⁴⁸

Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Apostle as saying: He who believes in Allah and the Hereafter, if he witnesses any matter he should talk in good terms about it or keep quiet. Act kindly towards woman, for woman is created from a rib, and the most crooked part of the rib is its top. If you attempt to straighten it, you will break it, and if you leave it, its crookedness will remain there. So act kindly towards women.⁵⁴⁹

8. Period of Uncleanliness Doubles with the Birth of a Female Child

We find in the Exodus that:

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying: Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.⁵⁵⁰

But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.⁵⁵¹

It is evident from the above that a woman giving birth to the female child will remain unclean twice the period enjoined for the birth of a male. There seems no sound reason for prolonging the uncleanness of a woman if she gives birth to a female child. It is a clear-cut discriminatory treatment of the females. In Islam, the woman is considered clean after forty days of the delivery irrespective of the fact that the child is a male or a female.

⁵⁴⁸ Sahih Muslim, Book 8, Number 3465:

⁵⁴⁹ Sahih Muslim, Book 8, Number 3468:

⁵⁵⁰ Lev 12:1-4 KJV.

⁵⁵¹ Lev, 12:5 KJV.

9. Sacrifice of Virgins or other Women on the Altars

By granting fundamental rights to the females along with their responsibilities Islam has equated them with the males. They, as such, cannot be held in servile position as we find in Judaism, Christianity and many other religions and races in the world.

In the olden times, young women especially the virgins used to be sacrificed at the altars of different gods. Human sacrifices especially of virgins among women used to be made in the Ancient Near East, Egypt, Europe, China, Tibet, Indian Subcontinent, Pacific, Pre-Columbian Americas, West Africa, Canary Islands etc. Islam has strictly banned any such sacrifice of males or females.

10. Swapping or Wife-lending

The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics states that:

Besides the practice of lending wives or of exchanging them at festivals—both of very wide occurrence—the exchange of wives for a shorter or longer period as a sign of friendship occurs sporadically, often between chiefs. The custom is found among the Australians, Eskimos, several American Indian Tribes, in Polynesia, with the Negroes of Angola, etc. while Sir G. Mackenzie says tinkers in the 17th cent. used each other's wives as concubines. In such cases the woman becomes the paramour of the man. **Again, where a chief, ruler, or priest has, or claims the right to a woman for the first night or nights of her marriage, such women are in the position of temporary concubines.** This practice is found among the Eskimos, the Caribs, and certain Brazilian tribes; in Nicaragua; in Malabar, and Cambodia; in New Zealand; in Africa; in ancient Ireland, and elsewhere. The right is also claimed at other times, or a chief or king may take any girl or woman as he pleases, or access may be granted as a favour, e.g. in the case of *Kalmuk* priests, who are not allowed to marry.⁵⁵²

Islam has strictly forbidden any such practice of swapping or lending the wives to others. No one is allowed to have

⁵⁵² *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 815.

sex with a woman who has not been lawfully married to him. The only exception had been a very small number of women captives of war allotted by the emir to some particular warriors or nobilities who could either retain them merely as handmaids or marry them to have sex. Such a woman remains attached to the same person for the whole life. Although she does not enjoy equality of status and rights with the regular wife of the master yet she is treated as his secondary wife. No one except her husband can touch her. If such a woman gets a child from her master, she attains freedom and the child is treated at par with other genuine offspring of the master in the inheritance of property of the deceased. For further details please refer to our chapter on Concubinage, s.v. '*Islam Curtails the Sources of Concubinage*' in the first Vol. of this book.

11. Freedom from Priests and Sacrifices

Judaism treats the birth of children like sin or crime committed by women. The woman giving birth to a child is required to appear before the priests at the LORD's tent along with a one year's lamb for a burnt offering and a pigeon or dove for a sin offering e.g.

And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female.⁵⁵³

The quotation recorded above is from the Leviticus which grants unnecessary and irrelevant powers to the priests authenticity of which is doubtful. It conflicts with the first blessings and the commandment of the Lord describing birth of a child as a blessing from the Lord instead of a sin:

⁵⁵³ Lev 12:6-7 KJV.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful, and multiply,** and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.⁵⁵⁴

We cannot, therefore, take the quotation from the Leviticus as a faithfully reported word of God. The law giving unnecessary importance to the priests may actually be the handiwork of the same community. There as such is no justification to penalize the women fulfilling the commandment of the Lord quoted above. Married women on the other hand deserve blessings than condemnation as sinners. Islam, therefore, absolves the women folk from any sin ensuing from the birth of children. Women are required only to wait for stoppage of blood or other excretions concerned with birth. Their uncleanness also does not extend beyond 40 days. Women neither need to offer any thing to expiate the so called sin of 'child birth' nor do they need to obtain any certificate of cleanness from the priests.

12. Relief from Hardships

The *Torah* had been so strict while dealing with women that it extended their uncleanness 7 days beyond the stoppage of their menstruation e.g.

28. But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. **29.** And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. **30.** And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for her before the LORD for the issue of her uncleanness.⁵⁵⁵

We, therefore, observe that while the Law of Torah treats menstruation as sinfulness of the females, Islam treats it benevolently.

⁵⁵⁴ Gen 1:28 KJV.

⁵⁵⁵ Lev 15:28-30 KJV.

According to Islam a woman becomes ritually clean as soon as her flow stops. She need not offer doves or pigeons to the priests at the entrance of the tent of LORD's Presence. No certification of cleanness is required from the priests nor is any offering to be made through him.

13. Preservation of the Token of Virginity

Here is a strange commandment of the Torah which not only disgraces the women but also inflicts great misery on them with ignominy for their parents.

If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, **14.** And give occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid: **15. Then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate: 16.** And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her; **17.** And, lo, he hath given occasions of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter's virginity. And they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city. **18.** And the elders of that city shall take that man and chastise him; **19.** And they shall amerce him in an hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: **and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days. 20.** But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel: **21.** Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.⁵⁵⁶

This is a strange method of establishing the chastity or whoredom of a woman. Where was the proof in those times to discriminate the blood of other animals from the blood of a woman? How long the parents had to preserve such a blood stained sheet with the proof that the same sheet was

⁵⁵⁶ Deu 22:13-21 KJV.

used during the bridal night? Was it mandatory for the married couple to stay at the woman's house on the wedding night and for her parents to preserve the blood stained clothes forever? It is also strange that the husband doubting the chastity of his wife may be enforced to live with a woman scandalized by him. For further details, the readers may go through Ch. 4, titled *Denunciation of Women s.v. 'Parent's Responsibility to Produce Token of Virginity'* in the 1st Vol. of this book.

14. One Could Marry a Virgin by Raping Her

The law in the Deuteronomy contains that:

If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.⁵⁵⁷

This shows that, according to Torah, the chastity of a virgin was not worth more than 50 shackles of silver to be paid to the father of the victim being the compensation for damage to his property. As regards the victim, she will have to live with the rapist throughout her life irrespective of the fact that she reconciles with him or continues to hate him forever. **Instead of being stoned to death, the rapist of a virgin is awarded with the prize of the damsel of his choice just against payment of 50 shackles of silver to the father of the victim.** Hence, no punishment for the rape can be inflicted on the person who can pay 50 shackles of silver to the Father of the victim.

15. Punishment Only for Women

When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets: Then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall not pity her.⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁷ Deu 22:28-29 KJV.

⁵⁵⁸ Deu, 25:11-12 KJV.

Bible, however, has no mention of any punishment for the similar crime committed by a male against another male.

16. Discriminatory Treatment with Females

We find in the Exodus that:

If thou **buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve:** and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.⁵⁵⁹

As against the above, a different treatment is suggested for the females:

And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do. If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, **then shall he let her be redeemed.** (...) ⁵⁶⁰

The GNB renders the verses quoted above in the following manner:

If a man sells his daughter as a slave, she is not to be set free, as male slaves are. If she is sold to someone who intends to make her his wife, **but he doesn't like her, then she is to be sold back to her father**; her master cannot sell her to foreigners, because he has treated her unfairly.⁵⁶¹

The law, however, provides no alternative in case the father of the slave girl has no sources to repay the amount received. The Torah also gives no concession to the woman who committed no fault except that her husband after enjoying her for an unspecified period starts disliking her. The justice would demand that the purchaser disliking the woman even before touching her may demand half of the price paid while the person having intercourse with her can demand nothing from the woman rejected by him. Similarly, we find in the Leviticus that:

⁵⁵⁹ Exo 21:2 KJV.

⁵⁶⁰ Exo, 21:7-8 KJV.

⁵⁶¹ Exo, 21:7-8 GNB.

If a priest's daughter becomes a prostitute, she disgraces her father; **she shall be burned to death.**⁵⁶²

This shows discrimination among the daughters of the priests and other women in the Israelites. Normally men or women among the Israelites are stoned to death for such crimes. The law quoted above, however, discriminates daughters of the priests from other women of Israel. It is also astonishing that no such punishment has been suggested for the sons of the priests committing the similar crimes.

17. Inheritance

In our chapter titled '*Polygamy I*' in the first Vol. of this book, we had quoted that "with the ancient Mexicans, Mayas, and Chibchas ... besides the first, the true and lawful wife, **whose children alone inherited**, there were lesser wives and numerous concubines".⁵⁶³ This system did not prevail only among the nations quoted above. In many other societies the sons from the lesser wives and the concubines were deprived of any inheritance from their fathers. In the same chapter, we had quoted from *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* that a Brahmin could marry up to four women of different castes but the first wife must be of his own caste. Marriage with her was regarded as more sacred being contracted from a sense of duty. The offspring of other wives or concubines received lesser share of inheritance as compared to the children from the first wife. The *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* records that:

In some instances, inheritance is granted according to the position of the mother – the children of a chief wife being most favoured, those of the lesser wives and concubines receiving lesser shares. With the Beluns of Timor, children of concubines inherit a third part of the residuum, and in the Philippines and Burma their share is small (Post, i. 147). **With the Khyengs, children of lesser wives inherit two parts, children of slaves one part, and children of the chief wife four parts.** In Egypt, all were legitimate; but those born

⁵⁶² Lev 21:9 KJV.

⁵⁶³ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 813. 'Concubinage'.

in actual marriage took precedence of and had superior rank to children of women of inferior rank or slaves. In Peru, the eldest son of the *coya* alone inherited the throne, but children by other women had no inferior position. In India, the illegitimate son of a Sudra has privileges of inheritance (a moiety⁵⁶⁴, and sometimes an equal share or the whole) when the mother has been under the father's control (his female slave or the slave of his male slave, according to Manu, ix. 179, and, in modern law, an unmarried Shudra woman kept as a concubine. The concubine in earlier times would always be a slave). The underlying idea was that the marriage of a Shudra was of so low a nature as to be itself a kind of irregular connexion.⁵⁶⁵

Islam had strictly forbidden the said tradition. All children of the deceased whether from the first wife, lesser wives or concubines, were entitled to equal share from the inheritance of the deceased. This rule, therefore, removes disparities of caste, class or priority of women based on their nobility or happening to be the first wife.

18. Divorce Forbidden Except to the Fornicator

In Torah it was quite lawful for the husband to divorce his wife. In the early Romans, however, divorce was unheard of. It has been stated that:

For five hundred and twenty years, it was said, there was no such thing as a divorce in Rome, and even after this example, for many years the marriage tie was regarded as absolutely indissoluble.⁵⁶⁶

Instead of following the Law of Moses, the Christians preferred to follow the law of the Romans. A Christian, therefore, could neither divorce his wife nor marry someone who is divorced. They rather ascribed Jesus having said:

⁵⁶⁴ A part or portion, especially a lesser share.

⁵⁶⁵ *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. III, p. 816.

⁵⁶⁶ Lecky, pp. 317.

Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.⁵⁶⁷

We do not believe that words quoted above are truly recorded from Jesus Christ simply because he being a follower of Moses could not have changed the Law without specific revelation from the Lord. Since there is no reference to any revelation here, we cannot believe that the God had changed His law. We cannot agree with the assertion that God had converted husband and wife into one flesh by joining them together. As discussed earlier, the LORD cannot be held responsible for choosing the pairs for the marriage. Similarly, the law does not compel the unwilling partners to live together. In case, there are no chances of reconciliation or peaceful living between the partners, the dissolution of marriage may be beneficial to both. The estranged partners can, therefore, seek separation under the law of the Lord to marry another spouse of their own choice.

Marriage in Judaism as well as Islam had been purely a civil contract in which recourse to divorce has always been open to either of the two partners. As against the law of Torah and Qur'an, the Christians have forbidden divorce in all matters except some adultery committed by the woman. As such, a man who decides to put away his wife, has no way out except to accuse his wife of adultery. Similarly, the only way open to a woman desiring separation is to commit adultery. Even so the divorced woman has no chance to marry another man. Jesus says:

But I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.⁵⁶⁸

Another verse in Mathews conveys the same:

And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and who so marrieth her which is put away doth

⁵⁶⁷ Mat 19:6 KJV.

⁵⁶⁸ Mat 5:32 KJV.

commit adultery.⁵⁶⁹

The verses quoted above not only conflict with the Law of the Lord but also turn the lawful marriage into adultery without any sound reasons for the same. The impracticability of the Law is obvious from the fact that the divorce rate among the Christians in America is about 50% of the married people. The ratio in other Christian countries such as Great Britain, France, and Germany may not be much different than in America. Since 60-85 % of divorced women or men marry again with different spouses, therefore, according to the Christian law, they are all committing adultery.

It is also worth noting here that the Islam annulled the prohibition on women not to remarry their former spouses even after marrying other people who had either died or divorced them. The Law of Moses (عليه السلام) entailed that:

3. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; **4. Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled;** for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.⁵⁷⁰

Islam, therefore, reformed the afore-stated interdiction in the following:

So if a husband divorces his wife (irrevocably), He cannot, after that, re-marry her until after she has married another husband and He has divorced her. In that case there is no blame on either of them if they re-unite, provided they feel that they can keep the limits ordained by Allah. Such are the limits ordained by Allah, which He makes plain to those who understand.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁹ Mat 19:9 KJV. See also Luke 16:18, & Mark 10:11-12.

⁵⁷⁰ Deu 24:3-4 KJV.

⁵⁷¹ Al-Qur'an 2:230 Yusuf Ali.

Besides many other benefits, the afore-stated relaxation also provided relief to the women who yearned for rejoining their children in the custody of their former husbands.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had taken on him to reform the marital laws to such an extent that the Law of Jahiliyyah may be replaced effectively with the law provided by the Almighty. To make his legacy more effective in the Ummah, he got those reforms implemented under his presence. In most of the cases the victims to face the bitter criticism of the enemies were the closest relatives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or his own person to bear the brunt of the attacks from the non-believers and the Munafiqoon. For details please refer to our chapter '**Zaid, Zainab and the Prophet ﷺ**', s.v. '*Islamic Reforms through Zaid bin Haritha*' and '*Reforms through Prophet's Marriage with Zainab*' and his marriages with his first cousins or widows of his first cousins.

Conclusion

Women being a weaker sex had always been subject to torture, coercion and exploitation throughout the world. Even in the ancient times women had been treated like commodities or mindless subordinates. They were supposed to be the properties of their husbands who could sell or purchase them as per their requirements. Women could not hold property in their names nor inherit anything from their parents in presence of the male heirs. They even did not enjoy the right to get divorce from their husbands except for fornication committed or alleged to them. Islam removed all types of exploitations from the women and did not allow any discriminatory treatment with them. Dominance of males over the females is also evident from the fact that normally women lose their own names, personalities or identification that instead of being called as Mst. A, B or C etc. she is known as Mrs. such and such. They, therefore, live under the name of their husbands. As against this, Islam accepts women as **full human beings enjoying equitable rights with the men**. The most conspicuous examples of the same are that none of the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ or the wives of his copanions lost her original identity to be known as Mrs. Muhammad, Mrs. Abu Bakr or Mrs. Umar.

Islam also eliminated all stigmas from women such as imperfect animal, lower kind of creature having no souls, the accursed flesh, guilty sex, women as devil's gateway, greatest obstacle in the way of salvation and the saying that 'from a woman sin had a beginning and because of her we all die' etc. We have, therefore, given a detailed description about kind and honorable treatment with women such as wives, mothers, sisters and daughters for whom bounteous rewards have been promised by the Lord. For details please refer to chapter titled '*Celibacy*' s.v. '*Celibacy and Monasticism Disallowed by Islam*' and chapter titled '*Women in Islam*' s.v. '*Different Roles of Women in Islam*' in the 1st Vol. of this book. In addition to the above, the readers may also go through the commandments of the Lord in the Bible stressing on the sanctification of marriage as a blessing and fulfillment of the first commandment of the Lord in the Genesis.

The excellence of celibacy and virginity over the married life had been based on hatred of sex as pollution for the humankind. The believers in the doctrine set aside the first commandment of the Lord blessing the human beings and advising them to '**be fruitfull and multiply**' (Gen 1:22). They also disregard the verdict of the God that '**It is not good for man to be alone. I'll make a help meet for him**' (Gen 2:18). As such, those who consider celibacy or virginity as an exalted state of the spirit must keep in mind that they are violating the first commandment and blessings of the Lord to follow their own conceptions about spirituality which opposes the purpose of their creation.

The known history tells us that even Buddha had left his wife and the infant son in a helpless condition in search of salvation. Islam on the other hand enjoins family life and living in the community to serve them and to guide them to a better way towards the Lord.

Islam shuns all discriminatory treatment with women. Examples of the same are that in the legal code of Hammurabi (1792-1750 BC) if a husband committed adultery, his spouse was permitted to leave him. **As against this, an unfaithful wife would be drowned.** In the Bible, we find that if a priest's daughter committed adultery, she had to be burnt alive while no such punishment was applicable to the fornicators among men.

Similarly, one finds great discrimination in punishment of wives with suspicious husbands. While the wife had to go through greatly ignominious procedure to prove her chastity, the husband committing adultery was immune from it. The wife failing the test of purity would, however, suffer from the consequences of the crime as suggested in the Numbers 5:17-31. Another example is that of parent's responsibility to produce token of virginity of the daughter married by them. The woman had to go through an extremely shameful procedure with horrible consequences while a man suspected of a similar crime could not be subjected to any such test (Deu 22:13-21). For details please refer to our chapter '*Denunciation of Women*' s.v. '*Wives with Suspicious Husbands*' in the 1st Vol. of this book. As against the above, Islam suggested similar punishments to men as well as women indulging into unlawful sex. Islam prohibited all types of disfiguration of the enemies, the criminals or the women for any crime committed by them. This included removal of ears or noses of men or women. Cutting of one hand for stealing under order of the Islamic court was, however, allowed. As regards dacoits, they usually happened to be men. On confirmation of their crime, the court could order removal of one hand and a leg from the opposite side. These punishments were awarded not only to deter the commoners but primarily to disable the thieves and dacoits from repeating the crime permanently.

Our study of the Bible brings us to the conclusion that some misogynistic scribes, priests or compilers of the Bible have been replacing or inserting certain revelations in the Torah which corrupted the true message of the Lord. The Bible becomes a book to exalt the males over the females reducing the later to a subhuman form. The human hands have, therefore, corrupted the revelations to such an extent that instead of improving moral behavior of the human begins the Bible contains certain passages which serve as lessons to commit all sorts of immoralities in the world. While adultery or fornication had been one of the greatest crimes in the Torah, the Christian fathers took it lightly so much so that in the present times, the western Christianity can be taken as a free-sex society. Turning to the celibacy or virginity they destroyed the sanctity of marriage. This fight against the human nature wrought a great havoc in the moral lives of the Christians. **In spite of the fact that**

they cannot quote any authority from the Almighty or from Jesus Christ to prohibit marriage or polygamy to the priests or other believers, they themselves became the lawgivers to ban the priests from living a married life and to prohibit polygamy permitted by the Lord. This fight against the nature of human creation destroyed the moral sense of chastity among the Christians. The result was that one can hardly find any priest leading a chaste life as desired by the Divine commandments. Henry C. Lea has commented that:

Out of a hundred parish priests scarcely one could be found who was not either openly or secretly married, and it was necessary to tolerate them to prevent the utter destruction of the Church.⁵⁷²

He further observes that:

(...) not one Catholic priest out of fifty could be found who lived chastely.⁵⁷³

Birth of children out of wed-lock in the West is increasing day by day. As observed earlier, most of the nunneries have turned into brothels and there had been numerous priests who were sons of priests. In a century or two, it is likely that the society may lose the very concept of ancestry or purity of blood. Outside assignments of women competing with the male co-workers make them vulnerable to frequent sex out of marriage. As such even married men and women are cheating on their partners on a large scale. Men have very cleverly thrown half of their responsibilities out of home on women due to which in addition to their natural duties such as looking after the house, procreation and rearing the children, they have to work outside the house to increase income of the families. The unnatural mixture of men with women is destroying femininity in the females while the men are losing their distinction as protectors of women, brave fighters and bread-winners for the females.

⁵⁷² Henry Lea, Vol II, p. 195.

⁵⁷³ Henry Lea, Vol II, p. 195-96.

As against the man-made law adopted by the Christians and the Jews, Islam depends upon Divinely Revealed law based on the nature of creation of men as well as women. More than 1400 hundred years ago, the Almighty had clearly defined duties of men as well as women based on natural division of labor. Although the Christian West may take great pride in their material advancement due to participation of women yet they are not mindful of the cost caused by moral degradation of the society. In spite of excessive wealth in the European and the American countries, one finds most tragic figures here and there. The rate of suicide and divorce is, therefore, highest in these countries. This is so because they are turning from the revelations of the Lord while many of them have adopted secularism instead of Christianity.

The increasing trend of secularism in the West had driven most of the Christians away from the Bible. In spite of the fact that the Old Testament had accorded great sanctification to the married life including polygamy, the modern man prefers to avoid all responsibilities of marriage and procreation of children. Living alone in a free sex society, therefore, provides unlimited market to men to have sex with women of their choice. It was to check this trend and to accommodate the divorcees, the widows and surplus women in the societies that the Lord did not prohibit polygamy in any of the books revealed by Him. To put a limit on the number of wives however, Islam reduced it to a maximum of four at a time. Under the said arrangement human beings had a wider space for sex and other needs in a lawful manner. The relaxation can, therefore, provide husband, children and house to the fertile women who desire the same. Anyone marrying one woman or more had to take the responsibility of maintenance of his wives and the children. This system, therefore, was more beneficial for women than for men because under the limited polygamy, the husband had to take all the responsibilities ensuing from his sex with his wives. Any sex out of the wed-lock leads women to live a miserable life of shame and wretchedness.

The Torah has numerous instances of polygamy and we find no prohibition of the same in the Bible. The institution was a remedy to moral degradation, because it provided wider space for sex to those who had greater sexual vigour or who needed more children. People having infertile

women could marry one or more wives from the divorcees, the widows or other women to gratify their sex and get the children under lawful means. It also served as a solution to surplus women in the society without divorcing the former wife or wives. The self-adopted law to prohibit polygamy has, therefore, caused innumerable maladies in the Western society. Surplus women in the nation fall easy prey to the womanizers and playboys hunting for married or unmarried women or the prostitutes. Consequently, sex out of marriage is likely to convert the most civilized societies into a society of the bastards. **Allowing polygamy as per law of the Lord is, therefore, the only way to absorb surplus women and to meet the need of those who can afford to have more than one wife.** Bertrand Russell in about 1929 had authored his book *'Marriage and Morals'* in which he observed that:

There are in England some two million more women than men and these are condemned by law to remain childless which is undoubtedly to many of them a great deprivation.⁵⁷⁴

As a lawful solution to the problems of widows, divorcees or unmarried women, Bertrand Russell did not suggest polygamy as permitted by the Almighty. He takes it for granted that monogamy is the only lawful form of marriage. The so-called '*wise-man of the West*' suggests that excess women may hunt out men and bear fatherless children so that they may not remain deprived of having offspring. According to him, in the position as suggested above the state should function as a substitute for the father and would give material assistance to her (woman bearing children out of wedlock). As an alternative to marriage or polygamy, he suggests that:

The other alternative compatible with the new morality is the **decay of fatherhood as an important social institution, and the taking over of the duties of the father by the State.** (...) Indeed all children would be in the position in which illegitimate children of unknown paternity are now,

⁵⁷⁴ Bertrand Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, p. 252.

except that the State, regarding this as the normal case, would take more trouble with their nurture than it does at present.⁵⁷⁵

He further writes:

We have to ask ourselves whether we should wish to see the State taking the place of the father, or possibly even, as Plato suggested, of both father and mother.⁵⁷⁶

It is, therefore, obvious from the above that even the most learned men of the West have gone astray from the guidance provided by the Creator of the heavens and the Earth. Claiming to be wiser than the Almighty, they continue to prohibit marriage of the priests and the ascetics instead of marriage and polygamy allowed by the Lord God of the Universe. As alternate to the same, they have adopted **same sex marriage, living with girlfriends without marriage**, free sex, incest, prostitution and even the sex with the animals. We cannot, therefore, be surprised to find in the media a recent report about Elizabeth Hoad, 49, a Page-three⁵⁷⁷ model who had well-documented flings⁵⁷⁸ in the 1980s with legendary golfer Seve Ballesteros and famed racing driver James Hunt to announce her plans to marry her pet dog after going on 220 failed dates. Obviously, the situation is the product of free sex atmosphere and insistence on monogamy. Such a state of affairs no doubt provides a paradise to the men used to change their sex-partners everyday without any responsibility of the result of their sex or providing sustenance and shelter to their victims. If the condition continues to prevail for a few centuries hence it will obliterate all signs of civilization giving way to the law of jungle in the community. In view of the above humankind must reconsider the results of unlimited freedom of sex which may ultimately erode all concepts of moral uprightness, chastity and the bloodlines.

⁵⁷⁵ Bertrand Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, p. 89-90.

⁵⁷⁶ Bertrand Russell, *Marriage and Morals*, p. 169.

⁵⁷⁷ A young woman who appears with naked breasts in photographs for some popular newspapers in the UK (*Cambridge Dictionary*).

⁵⁷⁸ Fling: A short, spontaneous sexual relationship (*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 11th Edition)

Those who criticize Islam just for the sake of criticism must reconsider their view point in the light of reforms to emancipate women from all types of miseries and cruelties in the world. The impartial study of present book may, therefore, help the advocates of the human rights to analyse the Islamic teachings to improve the fate of women in the world. In case men and women insist on free sex society, our future is doomed to be a refined form of animality without any concepts of the family, tribe and civilization.

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